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A FIRST FAMILY OF TASAJARA.

BY BRET HARTE.

CHAPTER IX.

THE wayfarers on the Tasajara turnpike, whom Mr. Daniel Harcourt passed with his fast trotting mare and sulky, saw that their great fellow townsman was more than usually preoccupied and curt in his acknowledgment of their salutations. Nevertheless as he drew near the creek, he partly checked his horse, and when he reached a slight acclivity of the interminable plain—which had really been the bank of the creek in bygone days—he pulled up, alighted, tied his horse to a rail fence, and clambering over the enclosure made his way along the ridge. It was covered with nettles, thistles, and a few wiry dwarf larches of native growth; dust from the adjacent highway had invaded it with a few scattered and torn handbills, waste paper, rags, empty provision cans, and other suburban *débris*. Yet it was the site of Lige Curtis's cabin, long since erased and forgotten. The bed of the old creek had receded; the last *tules* had been cleared away; the channel and *embarcadero* were half a mile from the bank and log whereon the pioneer of Tasajara had idly sunned himself.

Mr. Harcourt walked on, occasionally turning over the scattered objects with his foot, and stopping at times to examine the ground more closely. It had not apparently been disturbed since he himself, six years

ago, had razed the wretched shanty and carried off its timbers to aid in the erection of a larger cabin further inland. He raised his eyes to the prospect before him—to the town with its steamboats lying at the wharves, to the grain elevator the warehouses, the railroad station with its puffing engines, the flagstaff of Harcourt House and the clustering roofs of the town, and beyond the painted dome of his last creation, the Free Library. This was all *his* work, *his* planning, *his* foresight, whatever they might say of the wandering drunkard from whose tremulous fingers he had snatched the opportunity. They could not take that from him, however they might follow him with envy and reviling, any more than they could wrest from him the five years of peaceful possession. It was with something of the prosperous consciousness with which he had mounted the platform on the opening of the Free Library, that he now climbed into his buggy and drove away.

Nevertheless he stopped at his Land Office as he drove into town, and gave a few orders. "I want a strong picket fence put around the fifty *vara* lot in block fifty-seven, and the ground cleared up at once. Let me know when the men get to work, and I'll overlook them."

Re-entering his own house in the square where Mrs. Harcourt and Clementina—who often accompanied

him in those business visits—were waiting for him with luncheon, he smiled somewhat superciliously as the servant informed him that "Professor Grant had just arrived." Really that man was trying to make the most of his time with Clementina! Perhaps the rival attractions of that Boston swell Shipley had something to do with it! He must positively talk to Clementina about this. In point of fact he himself was a little disappointed in Grant, who, since his offer to take the task of hunting down his calumniators, had really done nothing. He turned into his study, but was slightly astonished to find that Grant, instead of paying court to Clementina in the adjoining drawing-room, was sitting rather thoughtfully in his own arm-chair.

He rose as Harcourt entered. "I didn't let them announce me to the ladies," he said, "as I have some important business with you first, and we may find it necessary that I should take the next train back to town. You remember that a few weeks ago I offered to look into the matter of those slanders against you. I apprehended it would be a trifling matter of envy or jealousy on the part of your old associates or neighbours which could be put straight with a little good feeling, but I must be frank with you, Harcourt, and say at the beginning that it turns out to be an infernally ugly business. Call it conspiracy if you like, or organised hostility, I'm afraid it will require a lawyer rather than an arbitrator to manage it, and the sooner the better. For the most unpleasant thing about it is, that I can't find out exactly *how* bad it is!"

Unfortunately the weaker instinct of Harcourt's nature was first roused; the vulgar rage which confounds the bearer of ill news with the news itself filled his breast. "And this is all that your confounded intermeddling came to?" he said brutally.

"No," said Grant quietly with a preoccupied ignoring of the insult that

was more hopeless for Harcourt. "I found out that it is claimed that this Lige Curtis was not drowned nor lost that night; but that he escaped, and for three years has convinced another man that you are wrongfully in possession of this land; that these two naturally hold you in their power, and that they are only waiting for you to be forced into legal proceedings for slander to prove all their charges. Until then, for some reason best known to themselves, Curtis remains in the background."

"Does he deny the deed under which I hold the property?" said Harcourt savagely.

"He says it was only a security for a trifling loan, and not an actual transfer."

"And don't those fools know that his security could be forfeited?"

"Yes, but not in the way it is recorded in the County Clerk's Office. They say that the record shows that there was an interpolation in the paper he left with you—which was a forgery. Briefly, Harcourt, you are accused of that. More—it is intimated that when he fell into the creek that night, and escaped on a raft that was floating past, that he had been first stunned by a blow from some one interested in getting rid of him."

He paused and glanced out of the window.

"Is that all?" asked Harcourt in a perfectly quiet, steady voice.

"All," replied Grant, struck with the change in his companion's manner and turning his eyes upon him quickly.

The change indeed was marked and significant. Whether from relief at knowing the worst, or whether he was experiencing the same reaction from the utter falsity of this last accusation that he had felt when Grant had unintentionally wronged him in his previous recollection, certain it is that some unknown reserve of strength in his own nature, of which he knew nothing before, suddenly came to his aid in this extremity. It invested

him with an uncouth dignity that for the first time excited Grant's respect.

"I beg your pardon, Grant, for the hasty way I spoke to you a moment ago, for I thank you, and appreciate thoroughly and sincerely what you have done. You are right; it is a matter for fighting, and not fussing over. But I must have a head to hit. Whose is it?"

"The man who holds himself legally responsible is Fletcher—the proprietor of the *Clarion*, and a man of property."

"The *Clarion*? That is the paper which began the attack?" said Harcourt.

"Yes, and it is only fair to tell you here that your son threw up his place on it in consequence of its attack upon you."

There was perhaps the slightest possible shrinking in Harcourt's eyelids—the one congenital likeness to his discarded son—but his otherwise calm demeanour did not change. Grant went on more cheerfully: "I've told you all I know. When I spoke of an unknown *worst*, I did not refer to any further accusation but to whatever evidence they might have fabricated or suborned to prove any one of them. It is only the strength and fairness of the hands they hold that is uncertain. Against that you have your certain uncontested possession, the peculiar character and antecedents of this Lige Curtis which would make his evidence untrustworthy and even make it difficult for them to establish his identity. I am told that his failure to contest your appropriation of his property is explained by the fact of his being absent from the country most of the time; but again this would not account for their silence until within the last six months, unless they have been waiting for further evidence to establish it. But even then they must have known that the time of recovery had passed. You are a practical man, Harcourt, I needn't tell you therefore what your lawyer will probably tell you, that practically,

so far as your rights are concerned, you remain as before these calumnies; that a cause of action unprosecuted or in abeyance is practically no cause, and that it is not for you to anticipate one. But——"

He paused and looked steadily at Harcourt. Harcourt met his look with a dull, ox-like stolidity. "I shall begin the suit at once," he said.

"And I," said Grant, holding out his hand, "will stand by you. But tell me now what you knew of this man Curtis—his character and disposition; it may be some clue as to what are his methods and his intentions."

Harcourt briefly sketched Lige Curtis as he knew him and understood him. It was another indication of his reserved power that the description was so singularly clear, practical, unprejudiced, and impartial that it impressed Grant with its truthfulness.

"I can't make him out," he said; "you have drawn a weak, but neither a dishonest nor malignant man. There must have been somebody behind him. Can you think of any personal enemy?"

"I have been subjected to the usual jealousy and envy of my old neighbours, I suppose, but nothing more. I have harmed no one knowingly."

Grant was silent; it had flashed across him that Rice might have harboured revenge for his father-in-law's interference in his brief matrimonial experience. He had also suddenly recalled his conversation with Billings on the day that he first arrived at Tasajara. It would not be strange if this man had some intimation of the secret. He would try to find him that evening. He rose.

"You will stay to dinner? My wife and Clementina will expect you."

"Not to-night; I am dining at the hotel," said Grant smilingly; "but I will come in later in the evening if I may." He paused hesitatingly for a moment. "Have your wife and daughter ever expressed any opinion on this matter?"

"No," said Harcourt. "Mrs. Harcourt knows nothing of anything that does not happen *in* the house; Euphemia knows only the things that happen out of it where she is visiting—and I suppose that young men prefer to talk to her about other things than the slanders of her father. And Clementina—well, you know how calm and superior to these things *she* is."

"For that very reason I thought that perhaps she might be able to see them more clearly—but no matter! I dare say you are quite right in not discussing them at home." This was the fact, although Grant had not forgotten that Harcourt had put forward his daughters as a reason for stopping the scandal some weeks before—a reason which however seemed never to have been borne out by any apparent sensitiveness of the girls themselves.

When Grant had left, Harcourt remained for some moments steadfastly gazing from the window over the Tasajara plain. He had not lost his look of concentrated power, nor his determination to fight. A struggle between himself and the phantoms of the past had become now a necessary stimulus for its own sake—for the sake of his mental and physical equipoise. He saw before him the pale, agitated, irresolute features of Lige Curtis—not the man *he* had injured, but the man who had injured *him*, whose spirit was aimlessly and wantonly—for he had never attempted to get back his possessions in his lifetime, nor ever tried to communicate with the possessor—striking at him in the shadow. And it was *that* man, that pale, writhing, frightened wretch whom he had once mercifully helped! Yes, whose *life* he had even saved that night from exposure and *delirium tremens* when he had given him the whisky. And this life he had saved, only to have it set in motion a conspiracy to ruin him! Who knows that Lige had not purposely conceived what they had believed to

be an attempt at suicide, only to cast suspicion of murder on *him*? From which it will be perceived that Harcourt's powers of moral reasoning had not improved in five years, and that even the impartiality he had just shown in his description of Lige to Grant had been swallowed up in this new sense of injury. The founder of Tasajara, whose cool business logic, unflinching foresight, and practical deductions, were never at fault, was once more childishly adrift in his moral ethics.

And there was Clementina, of whose judgment Grant had spoken so persistently,—could she assist him? It was true, as he had said, he had never talked to her of his affairs. In his sometimes uneasy consciousness of her superiority he had shrunk from even revealing his anxieties, much less his actual secret, and from anything that might prejudice the lofty paternal attitude he had taken towards his daughters from the beginning of his good fortune. He was never quite sure if her acceptance of it was real; he was never entirely free from a certain jealousy that always mingled with his pride in her superior rectitude; and yet his feeling was distinct from the good-natured contempt he had for his wife's loyalty, the anger and suspicion that his son's opposition had provoked, and the half affectionate toleration he had felt for Euphemia's waywardness. However he would sound Clementina without betraying himself.

He was anticipated by a slight step in the passage and the pushing open of his study door. The tall, graceful figure of the girl herself stood in the opening.

"They tell me Mr. Grant has been here. Does he stay to dinner?"

"No, he has an engagement at the hotel, but he will probably drop in later. Come in, Clemmy I want to talk to you. Shut the door and sit down."

She slipped in quietly, shut the door, took a seat on the sofa, softly smoothed

down her gown, and turned her graceful head and serenely composed face towards him. Sitting thus she looked like some finely finished painting that decorated rather than belonged to the room—not only distinctly alien to the flesh and blood relative before her, but to the house, and even the local, monotonous landscape beyond the window with the shining new shingles and chimneys that cut the new blue sky. These singular perfections seemed to increase in Harcourt's mind the exasperating sense of injury inflicted upon him by Lige's exposures. With a daughter so incomparably gifted—a matchless creation that was enough in herself to ennoble that fortune which his own skill and genius had lifted from the muddy *tules* of Tasajara where this Lige had left it—that *she* should be subjected to this annoyance seemed an infamy that Providence could not allow! What was his mere venial transgression to this exaggerated retribution?

"Clemmy, girl, I'm going to ask you a question. Listen, Pet." He had begun with a reminiscent tenderness of the epoch of her childhood, but meeting the unresponsive maturity of her clear eyes he abandoned it. "You know, Clementina, I have never interfered in your affairs, nor tried to influence your friendships for anybody. Whatever people may have to say of me they can't say that! I've always trusted you, as I would myself, to choose your own associates; I have never regretted it, and I don't regret it now. But I'd like to know—I have reasons to-day for asking—how matters stand between you and Grant."

The Parian head of Minerva on the book-case above her did not offer the spectator a face less free from maidenly confusion than Clementina's at that moment. Her father had certainly expected none, but he was not prepared for the perfect coolness of her reply.

"Do you mean have I *accepted* him?"

"No—well—yes."

"No, then! Is that what he wished to see you about? It was understood that he was not to allude again to the subject to any one."

"He has not to *me*. It was only my own idea. He had something very different to tell me. You may not know, Clementina," he begun cautiously, "that I have been lately the subject of some anonymous slanders, and Grant has taken the trouble to track them down for me. It is a calumny that goes back as far as Sidon, and I may want your level head and good memory to help me to refute it." He then repeated calmly and clearly, with no trace of the fury that had raged within him a moment before, the substance of Grant's revelation.

The young girl listened without apparent emotion. When he had finished she said quickly: "And what do you want me to recollect?"

The hardest part of Harcourt's task was coming. "Well, don't you remember that I told you the day the surveyors went away—that—I had bought this land of Lige Curtis some time before?"

"Yes, I remember your saying so, but——"

"But what?"

"I thought you only meant that to satisfy mother."

Daniel Harcourt felt the blood settling round his heart, but he was constrained by an irresistible impulse to know the worst. "Well, what did you think it really was?"

"I only thought that Lige Curtis had simply let you have it, that's all."

Harcourt breathed again. "But what for? Why should he?"

"Well—on my account."

"On *your* account! What in Heaven's name had *you* to do with it?"

"He loved me." There was not the slightest trace of vanity, self-consciousness or coquetry in her quiet fateful face, and for this very reason Harcourt knew that she was speaking the truth.

"Loved *you!*—you, Clementina!—my daughter! Did he ever *tell* you so?"

"Not in words. He used to walk up and down on the road when I was at the back window or in the garden, and often hung about the bank of the creek for hours, like some animal. I don't think the others saw him, and when they did they thought it was Parmlee for Euphemia. Even Euphemia thought so too, and that was why she was so conceited and hard to Parmlee towards the end. She thought it was Parmlee that night when Grant and Rice came; but it was Lige Curtis who had been watching the window lights in the rain, and who must have gone off at last to speak to you in the store. I always let Phemie believe that it was Parmlee—it seemed to please her."

There was not the least tone of mischief or superiority, or even of patronage in her manner. It was as quiet and cruel as the fate that might have led Lige to his destruction. Even her father felt a slight thrill of awe as she paused. "Then he never really spoke to you?" he asked hurriedly.

"Only once. I was gathering swamp lilies all alone, a mile below the bend of the creek, and he came upon me suddenly. Perhaps it was that I didn't jump or start—I didn't see anything to jump or start at—and he said, 'You're not frightened at me, Miss Harcourt, like the other girls? You don't think I'm drunk or half mad—as they do?' I don't remember exactly what I said, but it meant that whether he was drunk or half mad or sober I didn't see any reason to be afraid of him. And then he told me that if I was fond of swamp lilies I might have all I wanted at his place, and for the matter of that the place too, as he was going away, for he couldn't stand the loneliness any longer. He said that he had nothing in common with the place and the people—no more than *I* had—and that was what he had always fancied

in me. I told him that if he felt in that way about his place he ought to leave it, or sell it to some one who cared for it, and go away. That must have been in his mind when he offered it to you—at least that's what I thought when you told us you had bought it. I didn't know but what he might have told you—but you didn't care to say it before mother."

Mr. Harcourt sat gazing at her with breathless amazement. "And you—think that—Lige Curtis—lov—liked you?"

"Yes, I think he did—and that he does now!"

"*Now!*—What do you mean? The man is dead!" said Harcourt starting.

"That's just what I don't believe."

"Impossible! Think of what you are saying."

"I never could quite understand or feel that he was dead when everybody said so, and now that I've heard this story I *know* that he is living."

"But why did he not make himself known in time to claim the property?"

"Because he did not care for it."

"What did he care for then?"

"Me I suppose."

"But this calumny is not like a man who loves you."

"It is like a *jealous* one."

With an effort Harcourt threw off his bewildered incredulity and grasped the situation. He would have to contend with his enemy in the flesh and blood, but that flesh and blood would be very weak in the hands of the impassive girl beside him. His face lightened.

The same idea might have been in Clementina's mind when she spoke again, although her face had remained unchanged. "I do not see why *you* should bother yourself further about it," she said. "It is only a matter between myself and him; you can leave it to me."

"But if you are mistaken and he should not be living?"

"I am not mistaken. I am even certain now that I have seen him."

"Seen him!"

"Yes," said the girl with the first trace of animation in her face. "It was four or five months ago when we were visiting the Briones at Monterey. We had ridden out to the old Mission by moonlight. There were some Mexicans lounging around the *posada*, and one of them attracted my attention by the way he seemed to watch me, without revealing any more of his face than I could see between his *serape* and the black silk handkerchief that was tied around his head under his *sombrero*. But I knew he was an American—and his eyes were familiar. I believe it was he."

"Why did you not speak of it before?"

The look of animation died out of the girl's face. "Why should I?" she said listlessly. "I did not know of these reports then. He was nothing more to us. You wouldn't have cared to see him again." She rose, smoothed out her skirt and stood looking at her father. "There is one thing of course that you'll do at once."

Her voice had changed so oddly that he said quickly: "What's that?"

"Call Grant off the scent. He'll only frighten or exasperate your game, and that's what you don't want."

Her voice was as imperious as it had been previously listless. And it was the first time he had ever known her to use slang. It seemed as startling as if it had fallen from the marble lips above him.

"But I've promised him that we should go together to my lawyer tomorrow, and begin a suit against the proprietors of the *Clarion*."

"Do nothing of the kind. Get rid of Grant's assistance in this matter; and see the *Clarion* proprietor yourself. What sort of a man is he? Can you invite him to your house?"

"I have never seen him; I believe he lives at San José. He is a wealthy man and a large landowner there. You understand that after the first article appeared in his paper, and I

knew that he had employed your brother—although Grant says that he had nothing to do with it and left Fletcher on account of it—I could have no intercourse with him. Even if I invited him he would not come."

"He *must* come. Leave it to me." She stopped and resumed her former impassive manner. "I had something to say to you too, father. Mr. Shipley proposed to me the day we went to San Mateo."

Her father's eyes lit with an eager sparkle. "Well," he said quickly.

"I reminded him that I had known him only a few weeks, and that I wanted time to consider."

"Consider! Why, Clemmy, he's one of the oldest Boston families, rich from his father and grandfather—rich when I was a shopkeeper and your mother——"

"I thought you liked Grant?" she said quietly.

"Yes, but if *you* have no choice nor feeling in the matter, why Shipley is far the better man. And if any of the scandal should come to his ears——"

"So much the better that the hesitation should come from me. But if you think it better, I can sit down here and write to him at once declining the offer." She moved towards the desk.

"No! No! I did not mean that," said Harcourt quickly. "I only thought that if he did hear anything it might be said that he had backed out."

"His sister knows of his offer, and though she don't like it nor me, she will not deny the fact. By the way, you remember when she was lost that day on the road to San Mateo?"

"Yes."

"Well, she was with your son, John Milton, all the time, and they lunched together at Crystal Spring. It came out quite accidentally through the hotel-keeper."

Harcourt's brow darkened. "Did she know him before?"

"I can't say; but she does now."

Harcourt's face was heavy with distrust. "Taking Shipley's offer and these scandals into consideration, I don't like the look of this, Clementina."

"I do," said the girl simply.

Harcourt gazed at her keenly and with the shadow of distrust still upon him. It seemed to be quite impossible, even with what he knew of her calmly cold nature, that she should be equally uninfluenced by Grant or Shipley. Had she some steadfast, lofty ideal—or perhaps some already absorbing passion of which he knew nothing? She was not a girl to betray it—they would only know it when it was too late. Could it be possible that there was still something between her and Lige that he knew nothing of? The thought struck a chill to his breast. She was walking towards the door, when he recalled himself with an effort.

"If you think it advisable to see Fletcher, you might run down to San José for a day or two with your mother, and call on the Ramirez. They may know him or somebody who does. Of course if *you* meet him and casually invite him it would be difficult."

"It's a good idea," she said quickly. "I'll do it and speak to mother now."

He was struck by the change in her face and voice; they had both nervously lightened, as oddly and distinctly as they had before seemed to grow suddenly harsh and aggressive. She passed out of the room with girlish brusqueness, leaving him alone with a new and vague fear in his consciousness.

A few hours later Clementina was standing before the window of the drawing-room that overlooked the outskirts of the town. The moonlight was flooding the vast bluish Tasajara levels with a faint lustre as if the waters of the creek had once more returned to them. In the shadow of the curtain beside her Grant was facing her with anxious eyes.

"Then I must take this as your final answer, Clementina?"

"You must. And had I known of these calumnies before, had you been frank with me even the day we went to San Mateo, my answer would have been as final then, and you might have been spared any further suspense. I am not blaming you, Mr. Grant; I am willing to believe that you thought it best to conceal this from me—even at that time when you had just pledged yourself to find out its truth or falsehood—yet my answer would have been the same. So long as this stain rests on my father's name I shall never allow that name to be coupled with yours in marriage or engagement; nor will my pride or yours allow us to carry on a simple friendship after this. I thank you for your offer of assistance, but I cannot even accept that which might to others seem to allow some contingent claim. I would rather believe that when you proposed this inquiry and my father permitted it, you both knew that it put an end to any other relations between us."

"But, Clementina, you are wrong, believe me! Say that I have been foolish, indiscreet, mad—still the few who knew that I made these inquiries on your father's behalf know nothing of my hopes of *you*!"

"But *I* do, and that is enough for me."

Even in the hopeless preoccupation of his passion he suddenly looked at her with something of his old critical scrutiny. But she stood there calm, concentrated, self-possessed and upright. Yes! it was possible that the pride of this South-western shop-keeper's daughter was greater than his own.

"Then you banish me, Clementina?"

"It is we whom *you* have banished."

"Good-night."

"Good-bye."

He bent for an instant over her cold hand, and then passed out into the hall. She remained listening until the front door closed behind him. Then

she ran swiftly through the hall and up the staircase, with an alacrity that seemed impossible to the stately goddess of a moment before. When she had reached her bedroom and closed the door, so exuberant still and so uncontrollable was her levity and action, that without going round the bed which stood before her in the centre of the room, she placed her two hands upon it and lightly vaulted sideways across it to reach the window. There she watched the figure of Grant crossing the moonlit square. Then turning back into the half-lit room, she ran to the small dressing-glass placed at an angle on a toilet table against the wall. With her palms grasping her knees she stooped down suddenly and contemplated the mirror. It showed what no one but Clementina had ever seen—and she herself only at rare intervals—the laughing eyes and soul of a self-satisfied, material-minded, ordinary country girl!

CHAPTER X.

BUT Mr. Lawrence Grant's character in certain circumstances would seem to have as startling and inexplicable contradictions as Clementina Harcourt's, and three days later he halted his horse at the entrance of Los Gatos Rancho. The Home of the Cats—so called from the catamounts which infested the locality—which had for over a century lazily basked before one of the hottest cañons in the Coast Range, had lately been stirred into some activity by the American, Don Diego Fletcher, who had bought it, put up a saw-mill, and deforested the cañon. Still there remained enough suggestion of a feline haunt about it to make Grant feel as if he had tracked hither some stealthy enemy, in spite of the peaceful intimation conveyed by the sign on a rough boarded shed at the wayside, that the "Los Gatos Land and Lumber Company" held their office there.

A cigarette smoking *peon* lounged before the door. Yes; Don Diego

was there, but as he had arrived from Santa Clara only last night and was going to Colonel Ramirez that afternoon he was engaged. Unless the business was important—but the cool, determined manner of Grant, even more than his words, signified that it *was* important, and the servant led the way to Don Diego's presence.

There certainly was nothing in the appearance of this sylvan proprietor and newspaper capitalist to justify Grant's suspicion of a surreptitious foe. A handsome man scarcely older than himself, in spite of a wavy mass of perfectly white hair which contrasted singularly with his brown moustache and dark sunburned face. So disguising was the effect of these contradictions, that he not only looked unlike anybody else, but even his nationality seemed to be a matter of doubt. Only his eyes, light blue and intelligent, which had a singular expression of gentleness and worry, appeared individual to the man. His manner was cultivated and easy. He motioned his visitor courteously to a chair.

"I was referred to you," said Grant almost abruptly, "as the person responsible for a series of slanderous attacks against Mr. Daniel Harcourt in the *Clarion*, of which paper I believe you are the proprietor. I was told that you declined to give the authority for your action, unless you were forced to by legal proceedings."

Fletcher's sensitive blue eyes rested upon Grant's with an expression of constrained pain and pity. "I heard of your inquiries, Mr. Grant; you were making them on behalf of this Mr. Harcourt or Harkutt"—he made the distinction with intentional deliberation—"with a view I believe to some arbitration. The case was stated to you fairly, I think; I believe I have nothing to add to it."

"That was your answer to the ambassador of Mr. Harcourt," said Grant coldly, "and as such I delivered it to him; but I am here to-day to speak on my own account."

What could be seen of Mr. Fletcher's lips appeared to curl in an odd smile. "Indeed, I thought it was—or would be—all in the family."

Grant's face grew more stern, and his grey eyes glittered. "You'll find my *status* in this matter so far independent that I don't propose, like Mr. Harcourt, either to begin a suit or to rest quietly under the calumny. Briefly, Mr. Fletcher, as you or your informant knows, I was the surveyor who revealed to Mr. Harcourt the value of the land to which he claimed a title from your man—this Elijah or Lige Curtis as you call him"—he could not resist this imitation of his adversary's supercilious affectation of precise nomenclature—"and it was upon my representation of its value as an investment that he began the improvements which have made him wealthy. If this title was fraudulently obtained all the facts pertaining to it are sufficiently related to connect me with the conspiracy."

"Are you not a little hasty in your presumption, Mr. Grant?" said Fletcher, with unfeigned surprise.

"That is for *me* to judge, Mr. Fletcher," returned Grant haughtily.

"But the name of Professor Grant is known to all California as beyond the breath of calumny or suspicion."

"It is because of that fact that I propose to keep it so."

"And may I ask in what way you wish me to assist you in so doing?"

"By promptly and publicly retracting in the *Clarion* every word of this slander against Harcourt."

Fletcher looked steadfastly at the speaker. "And if I decline?"

"I think you have been long enough in California, Mr. Fletcher, to know the alternative expected of a gentleman," said Grant coldly.

Mr. Fletcher kept his gentle blue eyes—in which surprise still overbalanced their expression of pained concern—on Grant's face.

"But is this not more in the style of Colonel Starbottle than Professor Grant?" he asked with a faint smile.

Grant rose instantly with a white face. "You will have a better opportunity of judging," he said, "when Colonel Starbottle has the honour of waiting upon you from me. Meantime, I thank you for reminding me of the indiscretion into which my folly, in still believing that this thing could be settled amicably, has led me."

He bowed coldly and withdrew. Nevertheless, as he mounted his horse and rode away, he felt his cheeks burning. Yet he had acted upon calm consideration; he knew that to the ordinary Californian experience there was nothing Quixotic nor exaggerated in the attitude he had taken. Men had quarrelled and fought on less grounds; he had even half convinced himself that he *had* been insulted, and that his own professional reputation demanded the withdrawal of the attack on Harcourt on purely business grounds; but he was not satisfied of the personal responsibility of Fletcher nor of his gratuitous malignity. Nor did the man look like a tool in the hands of some unscrupulous and hidden enemy. However, he had played his card. If he succeeded only in provoking a duel with Fletcher, he at least would divert the public attention from Harcourt to himself. He knew that his superior position would throw the lesser victim in the background. He would make the sacrifice; that was his duty as a gentleman, even if *she* would not care to accept it as an earnest of his unselfish love!

He had reached the point where the mountain track entered the Santa Clara turnpike when his attention was attracted by a handsome but old-fashioned carriage drawn by four white mules, which passed down the road before him and turned suddenly off into a private road. But it was not this picturesque gala equipage of some local Spanish grandee that brought a thrill to his nerves and a flash to his eye; it was the unmistakable, tall, elegant figure and handsome profile of Clementina, reclining in light gauzy wraps against the back seat! It was no fanciful re-

semblance, the outcome of his reverie—there never was any one like her!—it *was* she herself! But what was she doing here?

A *vaquero* cantered from the cross road where the dust of the vehicle still hung. Grant hailed him. Ah! it was a fine *carroza de cuatro mulas* that he had just passed! *Si*, Señor, truly; it was of Don José Ramirez who lived just under the hill. It was bringing company to the *casa*.

Ramirez! That was where Fletcher was going! Had Clementina known that he was one of Fletcher's friends? Might she not be exposed to unpleasantness, marked coolness, or even insult in that unexpected meeting? Ought she not to be warned or prepared for it? She had banished Grant from her presence until this stain was removed from her father's name, but could she blame him for trying to save her from contact with her father's slanderer? No! He turned his horse abruptly into the cross road and spurred forward in the direction of the *Casa*.

It was quite visible now—a low-walled, quadrangular mass of white-washed *adobe*, lying like a drift on the green hillside. The carriage and four had far preceded him, and was already half up the winding road towards the house. Later he saw them reach the courtyard and disappear within. He would be quite in time to speak with her before she retired to change her dress. He would simply say that while making a professional visit to Los Gatos Land Company Office he had become aware of Fletcher's connection with it, and accidentally of his intended visit to Ramirez. His chance meeting with the carriage on the highway had determined his course.

As he rode into the courtyard he observed that it was also approached by another road, evidently nearer Los Gatos, and probably the older and shorter communication between the two ranchos. The fact was significantly demonstrated a moment later. He had given his horse to a servant,

sent in his card to Clementina, and had dropped listlessly on one of the benches of the gallery surrounding the *patio*, when a horseman rode briskly into the opposite gateway, and dismounted with a familiar air. A waiting *peon* who recognised him, informed him that the Doña was engaged with a visitor, but that they were both returning to the gallery for chocolate in a moment. The stranger was the man he had left only an hour before—Don Diego Fletcher!

In an instant the idiotic fatuity of his position struck him fully. His only excuse for following Clementina had been to warn her of the coming of this man who had just entered, and who would now meet her as quickly as himself. For a brief moment the idea of quietly slipping out to the corral, mounting his horse again, and flying from the rancho, crossed his mind; but the thought that he would be running away from the man he had just challenged, and perhaps some new hostility that had sprung up in his heart against him, compelled him to remain. The eyes of both men met; Fletcher's in half-wondering annoyance, Grant's in ill-concealed antagonism. What they would have said is not known, for at that moment the voice of Clementina and Mrs. Ramirez were heard in the passage, and they both entered the gallery. The two men were standing together; it was impossible to see one without the other.

And yet Grant, whose eyes were instantly directed to Clementina, thought that she had noted neither. She remained for an instant standing in the doorway in the same self-possessed, coldly graceful pose he remembered she had taken on the platform at Tasajara. Her eyelids were slightly downcast as if she had been arrested by some sudden thought or some shy maiden sensitiveness; in her hesitation Mrs. Ramirez passed impatiently before her.

"Mother of God!" said that lively lady, regarding the two speechless men,

"is it an indiscretion we are making here—or are you dumb? You, Don Diego, are loud enough when you and Don José are together; at least introduce your friend."

Grant quickly recovered himself. "I am afraid," he said, coming forward, "unless Miss Harcourt does, that I am a mere trespasser in your house, Señora. I saw her pass in your carriage a few moments ago, and having a message for her I ventured to follow her here."

"It is Mr. Grant, a friend of my father's," said Clementina, smiling with equanimity as if just awakening from a momentary abstraction, yet apparently unconscious of Grant's imploring eyes; "but the other gentleman I have not the pleasure of knowing."

"Ah—Don Diego Fletcher, a countryman of yours; and yet I think he knows you not."

Clementina's face betrayed no indication of the presence of her father's foe, and yet Grant knew that she must have recognised his name as she looked towards Fletcher with perfect self-possession. He was too much engaged in watching her to take note of Fletcher's manifest disturbance or the evident effort with which he at last bowed to her. That this unexpected double meeting with the daughter of the man he had wronged, and the man who had espoused the quarrel, should be confounding to him appeared only natural. But he was unprepared to understand the feverish alacrity with which he accepted Doña Maria's invitation to chocolate, or the equally animated way in which Clementina threw herself into her hostess's Spanish levity. He knew it was an awkward situation that must be surmounted without a scene; he was quite prepared in the presence of Clementina to be civil to Fletcher, but it was odd that in this feverish exchange of courtesies and compliments *he*, Grant, should feel the greater awkwardness, and be the most ill at ease. He sat down and took his part in the conversation; he let it transpire for

Clementina's benefit, that he had been to Los Gatos only on business, yet there was no opportunity for even a significant glance, and he had the added embarrassment of seeing that she exhibited no surprise nor seemed to attach the least importance to his inopportune visit. In a miserable indecision he allowed himself to be carried away by the high-flown hospitality of his Spanish hostess, and consented to stay to an early dinner. It was part of the infelicity of circumstance that the voluble Doña Maria—electing him as the distinguished stranger above the resident Fletcher—monopolised him and attached him to her side. She would do the honours of her house; she must show him the ruins of the old Mission beside the corral; Don Diego and Clementina would join them presently in the garden. He cast a despairing glance at the placidly smiling Clementina, who was apparently equally indifferent to the evident constraint and assumed ease of the man beside her, and turned away with Mrs. Ramirez.

A silence fell upon the gallery so deep that the receding voices and footsteps of Grant and his hostess in the long passage were distinctly heard until they reached the end. Then Fletcher arose with an inarticulate exclamation. Clementina instantly put her finger to her lips, glanced around the gallery, extended her hand to him and saying "Come," half-led, half-dragged him into the passage. To the right she turned and pushed open the door of a small room that seemed a combination of boudoir and oratory, lit by a French window opening to the garden, and flanked by a large black and white crucifix with a *prie Dieu* beneath it. Closing the door behind them she turned and faced her companion. But it was no longer the face of the woman who had been sitting in the gallery; it was the face that had looked back at her from the mirror at Tasajara the night that Grant had left her—eager, flushed, material with commonplace excitement!

"Lige Curtis," she said.

"Yes," he answered passionately, "Lige Curtis, whom you thought dead! Lige Curtis, whom you once pitied, condoled with and despised! Lige Curtis! whose lands and property have enriched you! Lige Curtis! who would have shared it with you freely at the time, but whom your father juggled and defrauded of it! Lige Curtis, branded by him as a drunken outcast and suicide! Lige Curtis——"

"Hush!" She clapped her little hand over his mouth with a quick but awkward school-girl gesture—inconceivable to any who had known her usual languid elegance of motion—and held it there. He struggled angrily, impatiently, reproachfully, and then with a sudden characteristic weakness that seemed as much of a revelation as her once hoydenish manner—kissed it, when she let it drop. Then placing both her hands still girlishly on her slim waist and curtseying grotesquely before him, she said: "Lige Curtis! Oh, yes! Lige Curtis who swore to do everything for me! Lige Curtis, who promised to give up liquor for me—who was to leave Tasajara for me! Lige Curtis who was to reform, and keep his land as a nest-egg for us both in the future, and then who sold it—and himself—and me—to dad for a glass of whisky! Lige Curtis who disappeared, and then let us think he was dead, only that he might attack us out of the ambush of his grave!"

"Yes, but think what I have suffered all these years—not for the cursed land—you know I never cared for that—but for *you*—you, Clementina—you rich, admired, by every one; idolised, held far above me—the forgotten outcast, the wretched suicide—and yet the man to whom you had once plighted your troth. Which of those greedy fortune-hunters whom my money—my life-blood as you might have thought it was—attracted to you, did you care to tell that you had ever slipped out of the little garden gate at Sidon to meet that outcast!

Do you wonder that as the years passed and *you* were happy, I did not choose to be so forgotten? Do you wonder that when *you* shut the door on the past I managed to open it again—if only a little way—that its light might startle you?"

Yet she did not seem startled or disturbed, and remained only looking at him critically.

"You say that you have suffered," she replied with a smile. "You don't look it! Your hair is white, but it is becoming to you, and you are a handsomer man, Lige Curtis, than you were when I first met you; you are finer," she went on still regarding him, "stronger and healthier than you were five years ago; you are rich and prosperous, you have everything to make you happy, but——"here she laughed a little, held out both her hands, taking his and holding his arms apart in a rustic, homely fashion—"but you are still the same old Lige Curtis! It was like you to go off and hide yourself in that idiotic way; it was like you to let the property slide in that stupid, unselfish fashion; it was like you to get real mad, and say all those mean, silly things to dad, that didn't hurt him—in your regular looney style—for rich or poor, drunk or sober, ragged or elegant, plain or handsome—you're always the same Lige Curtis!"

In proportion as that material, practical, rustic self—which nobody but Lige Curtis had ever seen—came back to her, so in proportion the irresolute, wavering, weak and emotional vagabond of Sidon came out to meet it. He looked at her with a vague smile, his five years of childish resentment, albeit carried on the shoulders of a man mentally and morally her superior, melted away. He drew her towards him, yet at the same moment a quick suspicion returned.

"Well, and what are you doing here? Has this man who has followed you any right, any claim upon you?"

"None but what you in your folly have forced upon him! You have made him father's ally. I don't know

why he came here. I only know why I did—to find *you*!”

“You suspected then?”

“I *knew*! Hush!”

The returning voices of Grant and of Mrs. Ramirez were heard in the courtyard. Clementina made a warning yet girlishly mirthful gesture, again caught his hand, drew him quickly to the French window, slipped through it with him into the garden, where they were quickly lost in the shadows of a ceanothus hedge.

“They have probably met Don José in the orchard, and as he and Don Diego have business together, Doña Clementina has without doubt gone to her room and left them. For you are not very entertaining to the ladies to-day—you two *caballeros*! You have much politics together, eh?—or you have discussed and disagreed, eh? I will look for the Senorita, and let you go, Don Distruido!”

It is to be feared that Grant's apologies and attempts to detain her were equally feeble—as it seemed to him that this was the only chance he might have of seeing her except in company with Fletcher. As Mrs. Ramirez left he lit a cigarette and listlessly walked up and down the gallery. But Clementina did not come, neither did his hostess return. A subdued step in the passage raised his hopes—it was only the grizzled *major domo*, to show him his room that he might prepare for dinner.

He followed mechanically down the long passage to a second corridor. There was a chance that he might meet Clementina, but he reached his room without encountering any one. It was a large vaulted apartment with a single window, a deep embrasure in the thick wall that seemed to focus like a telescope some forgotten, sequestered part of the leafy garden. While washing his hands, gazing absently at the green vignette framed by the dark opening, his attention was drawn to a movement of the foliage, stirred apparently by the rapid passage of two half-hidden figures. The quick flash of a feminine skirt seemed to indicate the coy flight of some romping maid of the *casa*, and the pursuit and struggle of her *vaquero* swain. To a despairing lover even the spectacle of innocent, pastoral happiness in others is not apt to be soothing, and Grant was turning impatiently away when he suddenly stopped with a rigid face and quickly approached the window. In her struggles with the unseen Corydon, the clustering leaves seemed to have yielded at the same moment with the coy Chloris, and parting—disclosed a stolen kiss! Grant's hand lay like ice against the wall. For, disengaging Fletcher's arm from her waist and freeing her skirt from the foliage, it was the calm, passionless Clementina herself who stepped out, and moved pensively towards the *casa*.

(*To be continued.*)

TALMA

At the end of the year 1776 the pupils of M. Verdier's boarding-school in Paris were about to be dispersed for their Christmas holidays. Besides the usual distribution of prizes the occasion was to be marked by an event of special importance in the performance of a tragedy which the worthy schoolmaster had written for his scholars. Of the details of this play, which was called *Tamerlan*, or of how the youthful actors acquitted themselves before their friends and relatives, history is silent. One episode only is preserved to us,—an unrehearsed effect which occurred towards the end of the piece when a very small boy, whose part it was to relate the manner in which his friend had died, broke down sobbing in the midst of his recital and had to be carried from the stage. This child of ten years was the son of a French dentist who resided in Cavendish Square, and enjoyed a considerable practice in the West End of London. The boy was called François Joseph Talma; a surname so un-French that at a later period, when its bearer had become famous, quite a serious controversy arose among etymological experts, some maintaining that Talma was Arabic in origin, others that it was Dutch.

But François Joseph's sojourn at M. Verdier's was brought to a premature close by the boy's Voltairean enthusiasm, derived from his father, which he exhibited in a very unorthodox outburst against his spiritual director on the occasion of the refusal by the Church to accord burial rites to the Philosopher of Ferney. The offence was unpardonable, and young Talma was in consequence removed from M. Verdier's after a stay of not more than three years. Re-

joining his father in London, he amused himself, together with other young compatriots, by giving recitations and dramatic sketches from the French classical repertory at the houses of those persons of quality with whom it was then the vogue to affect things Parisian. And so successful were these private representations that some of the more adventurous among the amateurs conceived the idea of establishing a regular French playhouse in London. Subscriptions came in readily enough from the West End; but when, more money being still needed, an attempt was made to canvass the City, the ambassadors discovered their mistake, and had to retire empty-handed, after hearing some very blunt expressions of opinion. The centre of wealth was also the centre of patriotism; and the notion of a French theatre in the British capital, according to Talma,¹ "was revolting to the true sons of Albion." As a set-off to this repulse Talma was pressed by various persons of eminence,—among others, he says, by Burke, Fox, and Sheridan—to adopt the English stage as his profession. The proposal was flattering and the prospect favourable, for the succession to Garrick was still open; but the father was minded that his son should qualify himself to practise as a dentist, and early in the year 1784 the youth was sent back to Paris, "travelling in one of those six-horse coaches which accomplish the journey between London and Dover in so rapid and pleasant a fashion."

This sojourn of five years in London deserves mention because it had the effect of initiating Talma at the most impressionable age into the beauties of the English drama, and inspiring

¹ *Mémoires de Talma*, recueillis par Alexandre Dumas.

him with that admiration for Shakespearean models which counted for so much in his after life. Though he has left no record of the event, it is possible that he now saw for the first time Mrs. Siddons and the elder Kemble, the latter of whom he entertained at his house in Paris some twenty years later.

At all events, Talma returned to the French capital with little taste for dentistry and with a great passion for acting. Naturally, in spite of professional duties, he gravitated towards literary and dramatic centres. Madame de Genlis was struck with his powers as a reciter; Molé, who was then playing Almaviva in the *Mariage de Figaro*, took him up, gave him the *entrée* of the green-room, and introduced him to Beaumarchais. Opinion on the young man's future was, of course, divided; and in deciding to follow a theatrical career Talma, like other great actors, went contrary to the more prudent counsels of his family. His first appearance, in 1787, seemed, it must be confessed, to justify the doubters, for as Séide in the tragedy of *Mahomet* the *débutant* attracted very little notice, the Press spoke the usual commonplaces about a promising young actor,—that was all. He had not taken the town by storm as Rachel did at her *début* years afterwards. And from this time till 1789, when he was elected a *sociétaire* of the Comédie Française, Talma in the occasional characters which he personated was given no opportunity of "creating" a great part. He waited, however, and worked,—worked principally with David the painter, whose friend he had become and with whom he studied the antique, reflecting how incongruous it was that the heroes of Greece and Rome should be represented on the French stage in powder and lace and knee-breeches.

Now it happened about this time that Talma had been cast for the part of a tribune in *Brutus*,—a chance which enabled him to make an experiment meditated by more than one

of his predecessors, but not hitherto adventured. So David and Talma conspired together, and the little plot succeeded well enough,—with the public at least, to whom a Roman tribune in a real toga and with bare arms and legs was a delightful novelty. With the other members of the company, however, it was quite a different thing. Jealous of new ideas, imbued with the traditions of their theatre, they were indignant at this innovation; the actresses, in particular, were shocked at the unseemly display of arms and legs. "Gracious Heavens!" exclaimed Mademoiselle Contat with a little scream, as Talma emerged from his dressing-room, ready to go on. "How hideous he is! For all the world like one of those old statues!" And a few minutes afterwards, Madame Vestris, who happened to be on the stage in the same scene, took an opportunity of saying to him in an undertone, "Why, Talma, your arms are bare!" "Yes," he replied, "like the Romans." "Why, Talma, you have no trousers on!" "No, the Romans did not wear them." "*Cochon!*" ejaculated poor Madame Vestris, and her feelings overpowering her, she had to go off the stage. Even with revolution in the air, as it was in 1789, it took some little time to habituate Parisian players and playgoers to so radical a change. The next actor, one of the old school, who filled a similar part, made great difficulties about donning the toga. He was induced to do so eventually, but only on the condition that two pockets should be let into the back of the garment,—one of these being for his handkerchief, the other for his snuff-box!

This beginning, then, of reform in costume Talma made at a time when he was the youngest and least important member of Molière's House; and for this very reason perhaps he was able to take a step which in a more prominent man would have met with less indulgence.

Greater things than this, however,

were at hand. In November, 1789, the Comédie, yielding to repeated pressure from the author, consented to produce the tragedy of *Charles IX.* by Marie Joseph Chénier, which had been accepted some time previously. In the existing state of public feeling the play was undoubtedly risky; and it was natural that the Court party should strenuously resist the representation of a piece which displayed a king of France in so odious a light. But the authority exercised over the Comédie by the Gentlemen-in-Waiting seems to have been shared in an indefinite way by the Municipal Council of Paris, with the result that the two neutralised each other. The Court prohibited, but the Mayor sanctioned, and in the end *Charles IX.* was produced. Among the actors themselves, however, there was a repugnance to undertake a part so sure to be unpopular as that of Charles. This was Talma's chance; he accepted the part which others refused, and made his name in the character of the weak, hypocritical, and cruel king who, influenced by Catherine de Médicis, sanctioned, and even assisted in, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. This was Talma's real *début*, an impersonation great in itself, and rendered still more startling by the circumstances of the moment. So strongly indeed were the feelings of the audience stirred that, after a few performances, the Town Council, not yet wholly revolutionary, was induced by the Clergy to prohibit the play. For a while popular indignation smouldered, till at length, on an evening in July 1790, it flamed out in one of those scenes which so often converted the stage of the Théâtre Français into the most riotous of political platforms. On this particular occasion *Epimenides* was being played to a full house, which included the deputies from Provence now present in Paris. By pre-arrangement, and prompted by Mirabeau, these spectators interrupted the performance with loud cries for *Charles IX.* To pacify them, one of the

actors, Naudet by name, advanced to the footlights and explained that *Charles IX.* could not be given because Madame Vestris who played Catherine de Médicis was seriously indisposed, while Saint-Prix who took the Cardinal's part was also laid up. But the actors were known to be Royalist and reactionary; the excuse was regarded as a subterfuge, and the uproar continued. Then Talma came forward, and promised that *Charles IX.* should be played the next evening, that Madame Vestris would make an effort to perform her part, and that the Cardinal's part should be read. Thus peace was restored, and next evening Chénier's play was performed before an audience inspired by the presence of Mirabeau, Danton, and Camille des Moulins.

The affair, however, did not end here. Talma's conduct was hotly resented by his colleagues, who were furious that he should have compromised them, as they averred, upon his own responsibility. Personal jealousy embittered political differences. The point of honour was settled between Naudet and Talma in the usual way, and fortunately with the usual result; and, what was more serious, by an almost unanimous vote of the *sociétaires* the offending member was expelled. The justice or injustice of this measure was argued on both sides in copious manifestoes; but for the rights and wrongs of the case the Parisian public cared little. It was sufficient for them that Talma, a friend of liberty and progress, had been censured and cast out by the upholders of privilege and tradition. He became at once a popular hero. "We thought," says the actor Fleury in his Memoirs, "that Talma had partisans; we discovered that he had a whole nation at his back." The expulsion, whether justifiable or not, was in short a blunder; and it led to such disturbances that by order of the Mayor the theatre was closed until the members had agreed to receive Talma back; which they did with a

very bad grace, and revenged themselves by allotting him the most insignificant characters.

Meanwhile as the situation outside grew daily more acute, so within the Comédie Française the political rupture became more distinct. Talma was not the only Patriot in the company; here also there was a Red Faction although a minority. The house in the Faubourg Saint Germain (the original home of the Comédie, on the site of the present Odéon) was divided against itself. In this state of things the dissentients accepted an invitation from the directors of what was then the Théâtre du Palais Royal, whither accordingly Talma migrated, accompanied by Madame Vestris, Monval, Dugazon and others. Thus a rival Théâtre Français was set up in the Rue Richelieu, where the Français now stands. The first effort of the new combination, *Henri VIII.* by Chénier, was not fortunate, in spite of Talma as the King, Madame Vestris as Anne Boleyn, and Mademoiselle Desgarcins as Jane Seymour; but Corneille's *Cid*, with Talma in the chief part, was more successful. On the whole the rival theatres were pretty evenly balanced; and Talma soon found himself strong enough to attempt what his mind had long been set on,—a Shakespearian, or rather quasi-Shakespearian, character in the part of King John in Ducis' play of *Jean Sans-terre*, to be followed after a short while by the same author's *Othello*.

At this point the tragedian's professional career was crossed by a domestic event of some consequence,—his marriage with his first wife, Mademoiselle Julie Careau, a lady who was several years his senior, a lady of wealth, of wit, of literary and political tastes. Whatever may have been the motives of the match, and it was generally represented as, on the man's side at least, solely one of convenience, its effect was to relieve Talma from a growing load of debt. To the expenses usual and almost inevitable for a young man when first

admitted to membership of the Comédie, there was added in Talma's case a natural tendency to extravagance. He was one of those whose ideas of economy are limited to religiously making every day an entry of fresh liabilities, regarding this as an excellent method of keeping accounts. But besides its financial advantages, the marriage resulted also in bringing Talma into immediate connection with public affairs. For Madame Talma's house in the Rue Chantierine supplied one of the leading *salons* of Republican sentiment. Here mustered Vergniaud, Condorcet, Roland, Dumouriez, and other chiefs of the Girondists; there was also a literary and artistic element, represented by men like Arnault, Ducis, and David, but politics predominated. Talma himself seems to have been rather the victim of these brilliant gatherings, if we may believe the account left us by his second wife, who describes him as being in the habit, when he returned from the theatre, of avoiding the noise and the lights up stairs by taking refuge in the kitchen, where his old cook gave him soup and sympathy.¹ None the less he experienced the inconveniences of being a politician *malgré lui*; for as the Girondists declined before the advance of the Terrorists, the house in the Rue Chantierine became suspected. One evening a *fête* was being given here to General Dumouriez, who had returned to Paris after his victory at Valmy. Music and song were in full swing, when suddenly the door opened and a figure appeared which sent a shudder of repugnance and fear through the whole company. This kill-joy was Marat who, with two attendants, had come nominally to seek an interview with Dumouriez on urgent public business, in reality, perhaps, to see what material might be collected for accusations. The uninvited guest met with a cold reception, in revenge for which he published in *L'Ami du Peuple*, and laid before the Jacobin

¹ *Études sur l'Art Théâtral*, par Madame Veuve Talma.

Club, a strong indictment expressive of his indignation at finding "the son of Thalia feasting the son of Mars." Nor was the incident forgotten; long after the Tribune of the People had fallen beneath the knife of Charlotte Corday, Talma lived in constant alarm, afraid to venture forth at night, and expecting that each day would bring the fatal decree of arrest.

There is, in fact, no more lamentable sight than the Théâtre Français between the years 1793 and 1795. The secession from the old Comédie has been already mentioned. The theatre in the Faubourg Saint Germain, conservative and aristocratic, was a perpetual offence to the ruling powers; and so before long it was closed on the charge of incivism, and its actors and actresses lodged in prison where they remained for the most part till the fall of Robespierre. Their persecutions and perils do not belong to this subject; but there is one little incident concerning Talma,—a graceful pendant to that instance of brotherly love which M. Sardou has not been allowed to commemorate in *Thermidor*. Among the members of the Comédie who were personally antagonistic to Talma, none was more conspicuous than Fleury. Fleury, as a Royalist, was now in prison, and somehow a document in his handwriting,—a pedigree establishing the kinship of Charlotte Corday with the great Corneille—had fallen into the hands of a rascal who, recognising the value of this piece of paper, determined to levy blackmail. Meeting Talma he inquired for the address of Fleury's sister, pretending that he had a bill against Fleury; but Talma, knowing his man and suspecting the nature of the business, declined to give him information. He offered, however, to settle the bill himself. After long haggling, and at a considerable price, the negotiation was effected, and thus Talma saved his *confère* from a fate not doubtful had this glorification of Charlotte been laid before Collot d'Herbois—once an actor himself, and now the most im-

placable enemy of the profession. It is satisfactory to learn that this good deed afterwards came indirectly to Fleury's knowledge, and helped towards the reconciliation which was ultimately accomplished.

Meanwhile, the old Comédie having been closed, the house in the Rue de Richelieu, where Talma played, continued to exist on the vilest sufferance. Styled now the Theatre of Liberty and Equality, it justified its title by the most outrageous travesties of patriotism. Not only was its repertory (*Brutus*, *William Tell*, *The Death of Cæsar*, and the like) carefully chosen so as to inculcate the virtue of tyrannicide, but not even a word suggestive of the old *régime* was admitted, and *comte*, *baron*, *marquis* were expunged, wherever they occurred, and replaced, without regard to rhyme or rhythm, by plain *citoyen*; so utterly was Art degraded to the lowest level of Sansculottism. "We had ceased," says Talma, "to be actors; we had become public functionaries."

And so things went on until, with the fall of Robespierre, we arrive at the most momentous event in Talma's life.

"After the curtain had fallen at the close of the *Trois Cousins*, Michaut entered the green-room accompanied by a young man of twenty-two or so in the uniform of a captain of artillery. I observed his features, which were striking; he was small, thin, very dark—almost black; his long hair fell on both sides of his head, almost to his shoulders; his eyes were keen and penetrating, and every now and then assumed a searching fixity." The young man was Napoleon Buonaparte, and these words contain Talma's first impression of him. They refer to the year 1792, but the acquaintance begun in that year does not appear to have been resumed, owing no doubt to Napoleon's absence from Paris, until the closing days of the Reign of Terror. At that time the two must have met frequently, either in the *salon* of Madame Tallien, or in David's studio,

or in Talma's own house which formed a refuge for the impossible people of all parties, giving simultaneous shelter to a Royalist (concealed in the attic) and to a Terrorist (hidden in the cellar). The moment for the "whiff of grape-shot" had not yet arrived, and the young Corsican officer, out of favour with the Government, was idling about in Paris, without money and without employment, very despondent of the future, and very much tempted to fling himself into the Seine. It was now that Talma took him up, lent him books to read, lent him money too, it is said, and procured him admission to the green-room, a compliment to be afterwards repaid by the *entrée* of the Tuileries. The details of this early association are uncertain and susceptible of embroidery; but the fact remains, and accounts in some measure for that unceasing interest in the drama and dramatic literature which marks the great usurper's whole career, and might form the subject of an as yet unwritten Life of Napoleon as an Amateur of Letters and Art.

Returning to Paris in the December of 1797 from his victorious Italian campaign, Buonaparte bought from Talma the house in the Rue Chantierine (hereafter known as the Rue de la Victoire) and there installed himself with his wife Josephine, entertaining at his table many celebrities, going frequently to the theatre and to the opera, and finally, on the eve of starting for his Egyptian expedition, witnessing Talma's performance of the *Macbeth* of Ducis. This latter took place at the Théâtre Feydeau where several members of the Comédie were now playing, and at the same theatre a few weeks later (May 25th, 1798) Talma sustained the part of Kaleb in Laya's *Falkland*, an early and (as it proved) a premature specimen of the Romantic drama.

At length, after vicissitudes which it would be long to narrate, the scattered members of Molière's House were gathered together again at the Théâtre de la République, henceforth

to be their permanent home. In taking this step the Minister of the Interior, M. François de Neufchâteau, was supported by all men of letters, with the notable exception of Beaumarchais, who, now at the close of his life, advocated free competition as best for the interests of Art. But the majority held to the principle of a subsidised theatre, and early in the year 1799 the company was reorganised with a staff of thirty-four *sociétaires* and seven *pensionnaires*, the *doyen* of the former being Molé and the latest recruit the famous Mademoiselle Mars.

The close of the Directorial Era forms (in the opinion of Talma's most recent biographer¹) a period in the tragedian's career,—a period in which his talent was ripening, though its greatness was not yet undisputed; for there were still not a few who contrasted him unfavourably with his predecessor Lekain, and disapproved of his unconventional delivery, his fidelity of costume, and his realism of gesture.

The years 1799 to 1803 are not marked by many new "creations," partly because, brilliant as was the company at the Comédie, there was an exceptional dearth of talent among dramatic authors; partly because Talma was more anxious to perfect himself in standard parts, such as Orestes or Nero, than to essay new ones; for, like our own Garrick, he was persuaded that the lifetime of man is not enough for the study of certain characters. Meanwhile at La Malmaison and at St. Cloud, where the First Consul and his family occupied themselves almost as much with the drama as with politics, Talma's services were in constant request—sometimes to coach the Buonapartes for their amateur performances, sometimes to join with Mademoiselles Georges and Duchesnois in playing Corneille and Racine. For a moment, indeed, his supremacy was seriously challenged by Lafon, a younger member of the com-

¹ M. Alfred Copin's *Talma et la Révolution* and *Talma et l'Empire*.

pany, who had attained great popularity, especially in *chevaleresque* characters such as Achilles or Orosmanes. This Lafon seems to have been little blest with modesty, and was in the habit of referring contemptuously to his rival as "the other,"—a fatuity which one day called down upon him a well-merited snub. "M. Lafon," said the Duc de Lauraguais, "I observe that you are far too frequently *the one*, and not sufficiently often *the other*." The struggle, however, was short and decisive, and by the voice of the people no less than by imperial patronage Talma's superiority was established.

In relation to Napoleon,—a part of whose policy was, of course, to revive the traditions of the Grand Monarque,—the Comédie now occupied a position very similar to that which, at its foundation, it had occupied towards Louis XIV.; only, instead of being players-in-ordinary to the King, its members were now players-in-ordinary to the Emperor. In this capacity the calls made upon them were frequent and continuous. Thus, when after his victory at Austerlitz Napoleon had returned to Paris, a brilliant series of classical representations was instituted at St. Cloud, in which Talma bore all the leading parts.

To this time may be referred most of those conversations between the Emperor and his favourite actor, of which fragments have come down to us on more or less good authority. The familiar legend, that Napoleon took lessons from Talma in the pose and deportment suitable to imperial dignity, is sufficiently refuted by Talma himself, when he says that so far from needing instruction, it was Napoleon who laid down the law on these points. Very concisely too and dogmatically did he lay it down, as when he thus criticised Talma's representation of Cæsar in *Le Mort de Pompée*: "You use your arms too much; rulers of empires are not so lavish of movement; they know that a gesture from them

is an order, and that a glance means death." And again, of Nero in *Britannicus*: "You should gesticulate less; and remember that, when persons of high position are agitated by passion, or preoccupied by weighty thoughts, their tone no doubt is slightly raised, but their speech no less remains natural. You and I, for example, are at this moment making history, and yet we are conversing in quite an ordinary way."

The Emperor, it is well known, was lavish of pecuniary help to art and artists. One day Talma observed to him that the Opera received a larger subvention than the Comédie. "No doubt," replied Napoleon; "but the Opera is the luxury of the nation; you are its glory."

After a long provincial tour undertaken in 1807, Talma at the end of the year assisted in the festivities held at Fontainebleau on the occasion of the Queen of Westphalia's marriage. In the September of 1808 came the historic gathering at Erfurt,—the barn converted into a theatre, and the *beau parterre de rois*. Then, released for a while from attendance at Court, Talma returned to Paris and resumed his original and favourite parts of Hamlet, Othello, and Macbeth, in the tragedies of Ducis. The experiment was hazardous, and all the actor's immense popularity was needed to carry it through. For under the Empire, partly from Napoleon's predilections, partly from the scarcity of fresh plays, the French stage was practically monopolised by Corneille, Racine, and, to a less extent, Voltaire; and the works of these masters, together with the few and not very remarkable productions of contemporary authors, had hitherto constituted the repertory of Talma. His excellence, indeed, in whatever part he undertook was now a matter of course, and amid the consenting chorus of praise one voice alone was raised in opposition, the voice of Geoffroy, the theatrical critic of the *Journal de l'Empire*, a trenchant and

powerful writer, but a man who seems from the first to have been invincibly prejudiced against Talma. That the strictures of Geoffroy, based mainly on the degeneracy of acting since Lekain's day, were ludicrously unjust, has never been questioned. But even Geoffroy, with the best desire to curse, was sometimes constrained to bless; and his criticism of Talma in these parts of Hamlet, Othello, and Macbeth (where no comparison with Lekain was possible) is instructive because it is directed, not against the actor,—who indeed is praised—but against the author. The French public were not perhaps more prepared for Shakespeare then than twenty years earlier, but even the most old-fashioned critic had come to recognise the impossibility of Ducis' compromise. "Take away the barbarian's form,"—writes Geoffroy—"and you take away his good points: Shakespeare must be left to go in his own bold untrammelled way;" a judgment which, though it might have been expressed in more complimentary terms, is at any rate something of an advance on the Voltairean idea.

But the most striking testimony to Talma's impersonation of Hamlet (his favourite part) is that of Madame de Staël, who had obtained leave to come from Switzerland as far as Lyons, where he was playing. The illustrious exile was at this time completing her work on Germany, and besides the appreciation of Talma contained therein, she wrote him two enthusiastic letters singling out for special praise his rendering of the Hamlet of Ducis and of Orestes in the *Iphigénie en Tauride*.

From Lyons, Talma returned to his duties at the Tuileries and St. Cloud. Like the other members of the Comédie, he found "starring" in the provinces a pleasant and profitable occupation; but these absences, becoming more and more fashionable, had seriously impaired the efficiency of the Théâtre Français, where it was often difficult to get together an adequate company for some particular representation;

and it was mainly to check these abuses of the *congé* system that Napoleon issued in 1812 his famous Moscow decree settling the rights and privileges of the members. The Emperor was perhaps not conscious, and not even Talma would have dared to hint it to him, that this disorganisation of the national theatre was largely due to his own capricious demands upon the players; for when, after Lutzen, he had entered Dresden, couriers were again despatched post-haste to collect the actors and actresses to that city, and a second edition of the Erfurt programme was gone through, though this time without the *parterre de rois*.

A year later the Allies entered Paris, and amid the general Bourbon reaction the Comédie Française made haste to testify its acquiescence in the new order by presenting Royalist pieces, or pieces with Royalist interpolations and allusions. On one of these nights when he had been playing Achilles in the *Iphigénie en Aulide*, it was Talma's lot to come forward after the fall of the curtain and read some verses of welcome to the new king. That he did so was made a reproach to him by those who saw in his conduct an act of ingratitude to his fallen patron and benefactor. The balance of testimony, however, seems to prove that the affair was not premeditated on Talma's part, but was forced upon him suddenly and against his will. Indeed, according to Régnier, the situation was saved by a marvelous *tour de force* of the actor, who, in reading this compulsory laudation of the Bourbons, managed to infuse such a melancholy of despair into his tone and manner, that when the end was reached, instead of the enthusiasm appropriate to the occasion, not a sound was heard, the audience remaining blank and silent as though they had listened to their own death-sentence!

Very delicate and difficult just now both towards the public and towards their colleagues, must have been the position of those members of the

Comédie whom Napoleon had especially favoured ; but Art, of course, has its exemptions, and this conviction may have solaced Talma, Mademoiselle Georges, and Mademoiselle Mars in their inevitable compromise between the past and the present, between inclination and circumstance. Talma himself, though he joined in greeting Napoleon's return from Elba, left Paris soon afterwards for the provinces, so that he did not witness the second fall of the Empire. Nor, it must be said, did Louis XVIII. show any revengeful spirit towards Napoleon's favourite ; on the contrary, he summoned Talma to his presence, and having congratulated him on his skill graciously added,—“And remember, M. Talma, I am entitled to be exacting ; I have seen Lekain play.”

Under these conditions, then, and in the enjoyment of an unrivalled popularity, the tragedian entered upon the last decade of his life. A year or two before the fall of Napoleon he had been relieved by the death of Geoffroy from the last of those praises of the past who bemoaned themselves as “being reduced to living upon their recollections,” and the place of Geoffroy on the *Journal de l'Empire* (which with the Restoration had become the *Journal des Débats*) was filled by a critic of a very different stamp in Charles Nodier. Nodier, the learned bibliophile and naturalist, the author of *Smarra* and joint author of that mysterious *Vampire* which set young Dumas first thinking on the employment of the supernatural,—Nodier, the advocate of Romantic principles in days before ever that name had been heard, was not likely to find fault with an actor for departing from conventional methods. And, curiously enough, whereas to the old school Talma's naturalness had been a main stumbling-block, Nodier on the contrary,—writing of his performance of Ulysses in Lebrun's tragedy of that name—criticised his voice as being too artificial, too sepulchral. Nodier's opinion, however, in this particular

instance, must not be taken as typical either of his own utterances or of those of others. It stands, in fact, almost alone amid an admiration so universal and so uniform that one would hardly exaggerate in saying that, during the last years of his life, Talma's sole critic was Talma himself. And none certainly could have been sterner or more exacting ; for with him, as with all lovers of Art, self-satisfaction was barred by the consciousness of an ideal. Among the most notable of his impersonations in this period may be named Germanicus in Arnault's tragedy of that name (1817), Leicester in Lebrun's *Marie Stuart* (1820), and in 1821 the chief part in the tragedy of *Sylla* by M. de Jouy—a character in which as the Roman Dictator Talma presented the Parisian public with a study which vividly recalled to them the fortunes, and even the features, of their own fallen Dictator. As Danville in the *Ecole des Vieillards* by Casimir Delavigne he essayed in 1823 a comedy-character,—or rather a character in comedy. Twice before in his career Talma had taken similar parts with success, and he was always said to have had an ambition to play Molière ; but the traditions of the French stage drew so distinct a line between Tragedy and Comedy that his experiments in the latter must only be regarded as meant to show what he could have done. Finally in 1826 he appeared for the last time as Charles VI. in Delaville's tragedy,—a character in which his representation of the King's madness is spoken of by those who witnessed it as a masterpiece of pathos. In October of 1826 Talma succumbed to an internal malady from which he had long suffered, and his death,—the news of which interrupted Frédéric Lemaître's wedding festival—was felt as a personal loss by the public, who throughout the illness of their favourite actor had insisted every evening at the Comédie Française, before the play began, on having the daily bulletin of his health read out to them.

From 1789 to 1826 Talma, besides his constant representations of standard characters, had "created" seventy-one new parts. As an exponent of the masterpieces of Corneille and Racine he was the successor, though not the pupil, of Lekain. Lekain was the first actor to substitute for the artificial declamation then in vogue, a more natural utterance and delivery; and in this respect Talma followed and went further than his predecessor. Lekain, too, had meditated a reform in the matter of costume; but it was reserved for Talma to initiate that reform and to establish at the very outset of his career, a principle which he consistently carried out by the most minute attention to correctness of dress and surrounding. To the eyes of contemporaries, however, the differences between the two men were more obvious than their resemblances. Roughly speaking, Lekain stood for the old school of actors, whose watchword in speech and gesture was Dignity; while Talma was the pioneer of Naturalness. The terms, of course, beg the question; but if the perfection of the tragedian consists in a proportionate blending of these two qualities, the palm must be assigned to Talma.

Another point of comparison between the two is well illustrated by the testimony of Madame de Staël (in *L'Allemagne*). After praising Talma's attitudes, his voice, his appreciation of the author's meaning, she notices his improvement upon previous interpretations of well-known characters, thus:

In *Andromaque*, when Hermione accuses Orestes of having murdered Pyrrhus, Orestes answers,

Et ne m'avez-vous pas
Vous-même ici tantôt ordonné son trépas?

In this passage Lekain used to dwell on each word as though to recall every circumstance of the order he had received. Now that would be well enough in the presence of a judge, but before the woman one loves, despair at finding her unjust

should be the one feeling that fills the soul. And that was how Talma conceived it,—speaking the first words with a frenzied force, then falling to a lower note in the next, and sinking at the last to a depth of prostration in which he could barely articulate.

This power of understanding and nicely interpreting the full meaning of the author depends on a literary faculty which few actors have possessed so conspicuously as Talma. To be convinced of this it is sufficient to look at the letters that passed between him and Ducis,—a correspondence which, while it attests the most cordial relations between author and actor, shows also that the latter, without actual collaboration, was responsible for many changes and improvements in the text.

And the mention of Ducis leads to the consideration of Talma in contemporary drama,—in those plays which were either written for him or with which he is especially identified. Foremost among these are the Shakespearian adaptations of Ducis, which Lekain had declined to accept on the ground that "it would be difficult to get a pit, accustomed to the substantial beauties of Corneille and the exquisite tenderness of Racine, to digest the crudities of Shakespeare." Talma on the other hand found in these modifications of *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Macbeth* his favourite studies, and the nearest approach which was then possible towards the freedom and fulness of the English drama. That he did so conquer his public, and force it to applaud, is the most potent proof of his genius; it is certain that no other actor of the time could have done so. For a generation, indeed, which has seen the triumphs of M. Mounet-Sully in the *Hamlet* of Shakespeare, it may be hard to understand the daring nature of the task which Talma undertook. Yet he had to contend, it must be remembered, not only against the orthodox literary contempt for Shakespeare, but also against the bitter political hatred of England and things English which

prevailed through the Empire and the early years of the Restoration. There is, in fact, abundant evidence that the French public, however much they may have been fascinated by Talma's interpretation of Ducis, infinitely preferred to see him in anything else.

Thus he was compelled, for the majority of his new parts, to have recourse to that intermediate school of writers with whom it was his fate to be contemporary, and whom the world has agreed to disdain as the Pseudo-Classicists. How he lamented this poverty of his age, how he yearned towards that new era the advent of which he could partly discern, and how at last he died just too soon to witness the birth of the Drama of Natural Passion—all this was a favourite theme with the young Romanticists who claimed Talma as their ideal of an actor. On the other hand the same man was equally the hero of the Classicists, who in their celebrated petition of 1829 referred to him as being the last true exponent of Art; a curious position, but one which does not altogether need commiseration. It is admitted that the dramatists of the Decadence were at least skilful playwrights—that they knew perfectly how *charpenter une pièce*; and when the piece was thus blocked out and garnished with an appropriate stock of sentiments, Talma was allowed full scope to animate the skeleton according to his will, thus “creating” in far more than the conventional sense those characters which he played. How he would have figured in the more melodramatic parts which suited Lemâtre so admirably may be a matter of speculation; but it is certain that he would not have found in the authors of the new school men so compliant as the Arnaults, the Lemerriers, the Jouys and the rest, whose plays he popularised, and who, conscious of the fact, bowed the knee and worshipped.

Apart, however, from academic questions of this sort, apart also from a thorough mastery of the theory of his art (the principles of which he em-

bodied in a short treatise on acting), there remains the secret of that marvellous fascination which Talma exercised over his age. It would be futile to resort to commonplace eulogies about the “sympathy between the actor and his audience,” the “personal magnetism of Talma” and so forth, for these things bear no genuine sound to other times, and are as empty of meaning as would be a mere catalogue of the parts he played. Since the influence of the living actor has to be compensated for by an almost complete oblivion with posterity, all that one can honestly do is to record those personal details of the man which seem to have counted for most in his professional life.

Of Talma's appearance Lamartine, referring to the year 1818, writes: “He was a man of rather massive build and middle height; the Roman type of his features and the dull tint of his complexion recalled some bronze cast of an Emperor; his forehead was wide, his eyes large and soft, his cheeks somewhat sunken, his mouth fine and delicate.”¹ This description, tallying sufficiently well with the impression derived from the bust which stands in the peristyle of the Théâtre Français, shows that Nature had done her part towards moulding the tragedian. Liable to a nervous derangement which compelled frequent absences from the stage, Talma's mental habit was that of a profound and morbid melancholy—so acute, we are told, that the sight of human beauty was painful to him by its suggestion of inevitable death and corruption.

Akin to such a temperament is the quality of abstraction, in Talma's case a genuine preoccupation in his art, showing itself sometimes in amusing instances of absence of mind,—as when, descending the stairs with Mademoiselle Desgarcins, and having forgotten to offer her his arm, he replied to the lady's expostulatory gesture by an—“Eh! what? . . . take hold of the banister!” at other times in a total forgetfulness of his purpose and sur-

¹ *Cours familier de Littérature.*

roundings,—as when, in the course of a lecture at the Conservatoire he illustrated the proper way in which a person overpowered by emotion falls to the ground, by going through the whole scene three times and on each occasion falling down himself, although he had begun by carefully impressing on his class that he would not actually execute the fall because the floor was very dusty and he had no wish to soil his clothes; at other times, again, in a pathetic desire to utilise even his own physical infirmity and suffering,—as when in his last illness he observed with satisfaction that his emaciated and sunken cheeks would suit him admirably for the part of Tiberius which he hoped soon to assume.

Of such sort was the man himself. To high natural qualifications he joined the results of profound and incessant study. And to these elements of greatness must be added that which the age itself supplied. Talma was the actor of the Revolution and of the Empire. He had witnessed the greatest horrors of France and her greatest glory; and he spoke to men who had

known these things and remembered them, men whom the pity and fear of Tragedy affected as a lively presentment of their own experiences.

"What was Talma?" says Châteaubriand. "Himself, his own age, and ancient time. His was the profound and concentrated passion of patriotism; his was the derangement of genius proper to that Revolution through which he had passed. . . Black Ambition, Remorse, Jealousy, the Melancholy of the soul, the Pain of the body, the madness which the gods inspire, the sorrow which human hearts can feel,—all this he knew. His mere entry on the stage, the sound of his voice alone, were powerfully tragic. Suffering and Thought were mingled on his brow, breathed in his immobility, his gestures, his step. . . Given over to sadness, expecting something unknown but decreed by a relentless Power, he advanced the bondslave of Destiny, inexorably chained betwixt Fatality and Fear."¹

A. F. DAVIDSON.

¹ *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe.*

THE RIGHTS OF FREE LABOUR.

FOUR important legal decisions affecting the rights of the working classes have been given during this summer. The great edifice of our judge-made law is, generally speaking, like the Temple of Solomon, so silently built up, that many important additions are made to it which often pass unobserved except by comparatively few. In the cool judicial atmosphere of the Courts changes in the law (under the form of its interpretation) are quietly made, which could only be accomplished by legislation after a heated discussion in Parliament. Such is the ease with at least one class of these decisions. They are so important, and have such marked and far-reaching consequences, that it is well to give them that attention which they fully deserve. Otherwise, many (and the majority of us are in the ranks of the employers or the employed) some day will find to their surprise that their rights and liabilities are far otherwise than they supposed them to be.

Of these four cases, two have reference to the relations of master and servant in their simplest forms. They are not so important as the others; but still they are important, in so far as they mark a gain for the wage-earning classes which is substantial, which at the same time is unalloyed by any concomitant evils, and which every one will welcome as being in accordance with justice and common-sense. They derive moreover additional significance from being decisions of the highest Court of Appeal, and as therefore settling once and for all what was formerly uncertain.

Their material facts are shortly these. In the first, a workman named Smith sued his employers, Messrs. Charles Baker and Sons, for damages for injuries received by him while at work in their quarry. He had been

employed in the quarry for some months at different kinds of jobs. Two months before the accident, he, with two other men, was set to work with a hammer and drill, he handling the drill and they the hammer. On the day of the accident he was in this way employed in drilling a hole, and at the same time stones were being lifted from the cutting, which was seventeen or eighteen feet deep. It occasionally happened that the stones so lifted were jibbed over the place where Smith was working, and it did actually happen that one of these stones in the course of being lifted fell upon Smith and caused him serious injuries. Smith was accustomed, whenever he saw a stone being jibbed over him, to move out of the way, but, as he was engaged in drilling a hole, he did not see the particular stone that caused the injury, and was therefore unable to move in time. It was contended by his employers that as he was aware of the risk involved in his work, he must be taken to have consented to incur it. The House of Lords held that, though he was aware of the risk, it did not follow that he thereby voluntarily submitted himself to it; that mere knowledge was not the same as assent, and that a man who was *sciens* was not necessarily *volens*. It was thought that a workman might be perfectly well aware that he was incurring some risk, that he might call the attention of his employers to it, and that, although the element of risk was not removed, he might yet continue to incur it rather than throw up his employment. It would be a hard case to say that a workman in this position had incurred the risk voluntarily. He might continue to work most unwillingly, dreading the possibility of injury, but dreading still more the loss of work and the miseries entailed by it.

Until the present case was decided an opposite view had been held by some judges, and might perhaps have eventually become settled law. Fortunately now this is not the case. Workmen are so liable to accidents in the course of their work, that every one will welcome a decision which places them in a better position to meet the inevitable risks of their calling.

In the second case a man named Johnson was employed by Messrs. Higgs and Hill, a firm of builders who had entered into a contract with the Workmen's Dwellings Association to erect a block of buildings. There was also an independent contract with Messrs. W. H. Lindsay and Co. to supply fireproof flats and floors in the buildings. Johnson and Messrs. Lindsay's men were engaged in their several employments at the same time, and through the latter's negligence Johnson received injuries for which he claimed damages from Messrs. Lindsay. They resisted the claim on the ground that their own workmen and Johnson were engaged in a common employment. It was perfectly true that they were engaged in the common employment of erecting the buildings. The importance of the case lies in this—that it has been decided that this is not enough to form a good defence, but that it is necessary to show that the injured and those who did the injury should have one common master. Now in the present case Johnson was the servant of Messrs. Higgs and Hill, and those who did the injury were servants of Messrs. Lindsay and Co., so that in no sense had they a common master. Johnson was really in the position of an absolute stranger to Messrs. Lindsay and Co., and it seems only reasonable that he should have the full rights of a stranger. In several previous cases an opposite view had prevailed, so that by the present decision the working classes generally have gained a solid addition to the legal rights which they already enjoy. This is an event upon which they may well be congratulated.

The second class of cases to which we refer have a most important bearing upon the status and rights of Trade-Unionists, and they therefore deserve the fullest consideration. They are two in number, and their material facts, which are very instructive, may be stated shortly as follows.

In the first, a workman named Lawson was charged with unlawfully intimidating a fellow-workman named Gibson. Both men were employed as fitters in the same shipbuilding yard. They belonged however to different Trade-Unions, Lawson being a member of the Amalgamated Society, and Gibson a member of the National Society. On December 3rd, 1890, a meeting of the Amalgamated Society was held, at which it was resolved that the members of that Society would strike unless Gibson would leave his Society and join them. Lawson communicated this decision to the foreman of the Shipbuilding Company in which they were employed, and the foreman in his turn communicated it to Gibson. After an interview between Gibson and Lawson, the former was finally informed that the Amalgamated Society were determined to carry their resolution into effect, and he was given until December 6th to make up his mind. Gibson was however not to be browbeaten in this fashion, and in the event he remained true to his own Society. But here a very untoward thing happened. The Shipbuilding Company, who employed a number of men belonging to the Amalgamated Society, in order to avoid a strike dismissed Gibson from their yard. It should be said in justice to the Amalgamated Society that no violence or threats of violence were used to Gibson's person or property; but Gibson was afraid, and justly so, that, in consequence of what Lawson had told him, he would lose his employment, and would find no more in any place where the Amalgamated Society was stronger than his own.

In the second case the material facts are these. A secretary of a

Trade-Union named Curran, and the secretaries of two other Trade-Unions were charged with unlawfully intimidating a Plymouth ship-owner named Treleavan. The three secretaries told Mr. Treleavan that, if he continued to employ non-Union men, they would call off from work all the members of their respective Unions in his service. Mr. Treleavan very naturally resented this dictation, and refused to comply with their demands. Thereupon the secretaries carried out their threat, and the Union men in obedience to the call struck work. It should be added that the secretaries did not desire or intend that any violence should be used, or that any personal injury should be done to Mr. Treleavan, nor were their acts or words calculated directly to cause any such violence or injury.

Now in both of these cases it was held that there had been no intimidation, and that therefore the accused must be acquitted. These decisions unquestionably constitute an important victory for the Trade-Unionists; unquestionably also they suggest much matter for reflection. First, they mark the consummation of a very instructive period of legal history, a history which affords a curious example of the manner in which men shift their point of view on questions of morals and politics. What was recently held wrong is now deemed right, and the paradoxes of yesterday become the truisms of to-day. The light in which strikes have been regarded is an example of this. Within the early years of the present century strikes were considered not merely impolitic (as indeed they may well be now), but criminal. We find the judges laying down *dicta* of this sort, "Each may insist on raising his wages, if he can, but if several meet for the same purpose, it is illegal, and the parties may be indicted for conspiracy;" or again, "Combinations, whether on the part of workmen to increase or of the masters to lower wages, are equally illegal." Chief

Justice Sir William Earle spoke of strikes "as the power of evil in remorseless activity, destroying those relations between employers and employed on which comfort and peace depend, bringing guilt and misery on the workmen and ruin on their employers." With much of this statement every one will cordially agree. There can be no doubt at least about the misery and ruin. How the idea arose that to strike was criminal it is not easy to discover. There were indeed some ancient statutes which made it unlawful for workmen to combine for the purpose of raising wages or regulating the hours of work. One at least was passed in the reign of Edward VI. These statutes, and the notion that strikes were contrary to public policy as being a restraint of trade, were probably the foundation of the theory that strikes were illegal. However that may be, public opinion began to make its power felt in favour of a relaxation of a law which came to be regarded as unsatisfactory and unfair. The first step in this direction was taken in 1826. Strikes were then for the first time made legal, but the value of the concession was much limited owing to the comprehensive manner in which a number of acts were prohibited. Strikes were indeed made legal, but so timorous were our legislators that they took care to render it almost impossible that the strikes could be conducted under other than illegal conditions. It became apparent that the prohibitions contained in this statute were too stringent, and so in 1871 a new statute was passed by which intimidation was practically restricted to mean threats of personal violence. Finally in 1875 this statute also was repealed, and the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act substituted for it. This act likewise prohibited intimidation, but it left the meaning of the word entirely undefined, and in the two cases given above the judges being called upon to say what intimi-

dation meant, declared its meaning to be restricted to threats of personal violence. Here then we have before us an interesting picture of the gradual modification of public opinion. It may be even cited in illustration of the theory that there is no absolute standard in morals, but that they are merely relative to time and place. For just as a certain sect in Arabia is said to hold tobacco-smoking to be worse than murder, so in England at the beginning of this present century to strike was held criminal, while wholesale political bribery was held, if not laudable, at least blameless. But gradually public opinion changed. First, strikes were illegal; then they were made legal, but only in a niggardly spirit; lastly, their legality was fully and generously conceded, and now men may strike as much as they please so long as they abstain from threats of personal violence. The change is immense. The Papacy is not usually regarded as other than a somewhat laggard institution. But even Leo XIII., in his recent Encyclical on the Condition of Labour, is emphatic in his encouragement of Workmen's Associations, and implicitly recognizes their right to strike.

All this is well so far. Trade-Unions, when conducted in accordance with their first principles, may be harmless and even necessary institutions. We hardly in these days require to be reminded that union is strength by Scriptural authority, such as the passages quoted in the Papal Encyclical: "Woe to him that is alone, for when he falleth he hath none to help him;" "A brother that is helped by his brother is like a strong city," and so forth. Nor will it be denied that strikes should be up to a certain point legal. Occasions may doubtless arise when workmen can only obtain justice by striking, for, again to use the words of the Encyclical, "there is a dictate of nature more imperious and more ancient than any bargain between man and man, that the remuneration must be enough to support

the wage-earner in reasonable and frugal comfort. If through necessity, or fear of a worse evil, the workman accepts harder conditions because an employer or contractor will give him no better, he is the victim of force or injustice." But these decisions go to much greater lengths than merely reinforcing the liberty of working men to strike. Let us consider what the facts of these two cases were. In the first, the action of the Amalgamated Society resulted in a very serious interference with Gibson's freedom of action. He was, in fact, placed on the horns of a dilemma. Either he was to be compelled to leave his own Society and join another against his will, or he was to be subjected to the risk of losing his employment. He preferred to incur the risk, and in the event did actually lose his employment. And all this although he was a good citizen, willing and able to work and serve his employers. If this be not tyranny, it is a very perfect imitation of it. It is simply monstrous that a man should not be able to work for any one he pleases, or to belong to any Society he pleases, without being subjected to pressure of this sort. Then again the Shipbuilding Company was placed in a position in which no employers of labour ever should be placed. Either it had to dismiss Gibson for no fault of his, which was an act of injustice, or it had to submit to a strike of its own men with all its disastrous consequences. It preferred the former course, and sacrificed Gibson to its own interests. The facts of the second case are as bad as, if not worse than, the first. In this case Mr. Treleavan, the employer, was placed in the dilemma of having to submit to a strike, or to dismiss the non-Union men in his employ for no fault of their own. He declined to do the latter, an act of gross injustice, and in consequence had to encounter a strike. A workman surely ought to be at liberty to decide for himself whether he will join any Trade-Union at all, without being submitted to almost irresistible pressure

to compel him to join. The Trade-Union says to him almost in so many words, "Join us or starve." Leo XIII. in his Encyclical has declared that there is a good deal of evidence which goes to prove that many workmen's Societies "are managed on principles far from compatible with Christianity and the public well-being; and that they do their best to get into their hands the whole field of labour and to force workmen either to join them or starve." If Leo XIII. wants any more evidence of this, he has it in these two cases ready to his hand. And herein lies their great importance, for by them the seal and sanction of the law is given to acts which do really seem to conflict with Christianity and the public weal. This new Apocalypse of tyranny that is presented to us is appalling. For it should be noted that the two cases we have described are only examples which have happened to come before the Courts. They are only samples of the bulk, and what that bulk is we may infer from the case of Michael Crawley, the facts of which have been given in a letter to *The Standard* from Mr. John Sennett. Crawley was a Thames lighterman, who, when the Lightermen's Union resolved to take part in the great dock strike, refused to join in that strike. He entered the service of Messrs. A. and P. Keen, of Bermondsey, and remained with them for a considerable period. When the strike was over, the Lightermen's Union had the effrontery to impose a fine of five pounds upon him as a punishment for remaining at work. This he flatly refused to pay, and, as Messrs. Keen very properly declined to dismiss him, it was decided to boycott him. Never was a resolution carried out with more unflagging persistency or inexorable cruelty. The lightermen would neither speak with him nor work with him. He was an outcast, a pariah, a social leper. Every obstacle was placed in his way. He did not even escape violence. Even when he was compelled by inability to obtain work at his usual

calling to look for it elsewhere, his persecution did not cease. He was hounded down wherever he went and whatever he did. The result was that he was driven to great straits, almost to starvation and suicide. And all for what? Because he had the presumption to differ from his fellow-workmen on the opportuneness of a strike! Tyranny could not well go much further.

Trade-Unions are above all Societies bound to refrain from any infraction of the liberty of others. It is to the sacred principle of liberty that they owe their present position. It was strenuously argued by their supporters that liberty demanded the abolition of the Combination Laws, and it was further claimed that Trade-Unionism, though unrestrained, would never curtail the freedom of any man. The wheel of Fortune has spun round, and Trade-Unionism now "stands upon the top of golden hours." It has triumphed; but can it be said to have remained true to the promises made for it? Assuredly it cannot. It was said that they would only put moral pressure or suasion upon workmen who differed from them. But in the cases described the pressure might certainly be described as immoral. In Gibson's case the Amalgamated Society had not even the excuse so often put forward by Trade-Unions for boycotting those who refuse to join in a strike. It is said that those men who take the place of strikers, and who are called "blacklegs," are willing enough to reap, and do reap, the advantages of Trade-Unionism. They gain the benefit of a rise in wages, but they shirk the burden and heat of the day, and step in to enjoy the fruits of the labour of others. There may possibly be some justice in this contention, but it has no application to Gibson's case. He actually belonged to a Trade-Union, and did not step in to take the place of a striker; it was simply the tyranny of the Amalgamated Society which would brook no rival. Then, again, both in this case and the Ply-

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mouth case, the Trade-Unions seemed not to care one jot how much they injured the employers, so long as they gained their end. The shipbuilding company and Mr. Treleavan had nothing whatever to do with the Trade-Unions' grievances; and yet the Trade-Unions did not hesitate either to compel them to acts of injustice or to submit them to heavy loss. There used to be a maxim that you should so use your own as not to injure any one else. This would seem to have been abrogated, so far as Trade-Unions are concerned. Then what of the morality of the treatment meted out to Crawley? There might have been some foundation of justice in refusing to work with him during the continuance of the strike. But when the strike was over, even when he had ceased to work as a lighterman, he was persistently persecuted. Such treatment was nothing but revenge as senseless as it was cruel. But the worst of all this is, that, since the decisions in the Newcastle and Plymouth cases, it is legalized by the law of the land. It is not intimidation, in the sense of threats of violence, and that is enough. Even in Crawley's case, it was only actual assault that was illegal. But tyranny may be not the less odious and oppressive because indirect and more or less veiled. And torture may be moral as well as physical; the enforced loss of work, and the resulting pinch of poverty, may be even harder to bear than actual violence. The pangs of starvation may be a more exquisite pain than that caused by a blow or a kick. But, according to the present state of the law, you may threaten the former, though not the latter. It is noteworthy that these decisions are approved by such a sturdy supporter of the true principles of Trade-Unionism as Mr. Howell, M.P. He declares that if these cases had been decided differently it would have rendered the Act of 1875 "a trap for the unwary," and that such an interpretation would have been "a class declaration of a

class law." But the law would have been the same for everybody, for employers and employed alike, so that it is difficult to see the validity of his contention. What we may expect to be the view of the more fiery advocates of what is called the new Trade-Unionism may be inferred from the fact that, at the Trade-Union Congress of 1890, the Parliamentary Committee was instructed to secure the removal even of the existing restrictions on intimidation. Fortunately this enormity has not been again perpetrated at the last Congress.

It is unhappily too true that for the most part the only bond that now exists between master and servant is the bond of money. Even Shakespeare lamented the disappearance of

The constant service of the antique world,
When service sweat for duty, not for meed.

But that is all the more reason why the relations of master and servant, and, it may be added, of servant and servant, should be put on a proper legal footing. It is bad that Trade-Unionists should terrorize non-Unionists: it is worse that one Trade-Union should try to trample on the members of another Trade-Union; but it is worse still that employers should be made to suffer loss in consequence. This state of things is intolerable, and not to be borne; it must be mended or ended. And this can be easily done. For even so late as the year 1867 it was held by the judges that a strike was illegal, at least in so far as its object was to coerce a workman in respect of the freedom of his industry or an employer in respect of the management of his business. This doctrine was subsequently exploded. But if it was embodied in a short statute it would go a long way towards removing an evil which tends to grow, now that the newer Trade-Unionists seem inclined to break from those first principles which have been their best support, and which can be their only excuse.

C. B. ROYLANCE KENT.

THE FLOWER OF FORGIVENESS.

"SURELY this is very rare?" I remarked, as looking through a herbarium of Himalayan plants belonging to a friend of mine I came upon a small anemone which, contrary to the custom of that most delicate of flowers, had preserved its colour in all its first freshness. Indeed the scarlet petals, each bearing a distinct heartshaped blotch of white in the centre, could scarcely have glowed more brilliantly in life than they did in death.

"Very rare," returned the owner after a pause; "I have reason to believe it unique,—so far as collections go at any rate."

"I see you have called it *Remissionensis*. What induced you to give it such an odd name?"

He smiled. "Dog-Latin, I acknowledge. As for the reason,—can you not guess?"

"Well," I replied, looking closer at the white and red flowers, "I have not your vivid imagination, but I presume it was in allusion to sins as scarlet, and hearts white as wool. Ah! it was found, I see, near the Cave of Amarnâth; that accounts for the connection of ideas."

"No doubt," he said quietly, "that accounts for the connection in a measure; not entirely. The fact is, a very odd story,—the oddest story I ever came into personally—is connected with that flower. You remember Taylor, surgeon of the 101st, who died of pyæmia contracted in some of his cholera experiments? Well, just after I joined, we chummed together in Cashmere, where he was making the herbarium at which you have been looking. He was a most charming companion for a youngster eager to understand something of a new life, for, without exception, he knew more of native thought and feeling than any

other man I ever met. He had a sort of intuition about it; yet at the same time he was curiously unsympathetic, and seemed to look on it merely as a field for research, and nothing more. He used to talk to every man he met on the road, and in this way managed to acquire an extraordinary amount of information utterly undreamed of by most Englishmen. For instance, his first acquaintance with the existence of this anemone grew out of a chance conversation with an old ruffian besmeared with filth from head to foot, and it was his consequent desire to add the rarity to his collection, joined to my fancy for seeing a real pilgrimage, which brought us to Islamabad about the end of July, about the time, that is to say, of the annual festival.

"The sacred spring where the pilgrimage is inaugurated by a solemn feeding of the holy fish is some way from the town, so we pitched our tents under a plane tree close to the temples, in order to see the whole show. And a queer show it was. Brummagem umbrellas stuck like mushrooms over green stretches of grass, and giving shelter to a motley crew; *jogis*, or wandering mendicants, meditating on the mystic word Om and thereafter lighting sacred fires with Swedish *tändstickors*; Government clerks, bereft of raiment, forgetting reports and averages in a return to primitive humanity. Taylor never tired of pointing out these strange contrasts, and over his evening pipe read me many a long lecture on putting new wine into old bottles. For myself it interested me immensely. I liked to think of the young men and maidens, the weary workers and the hoary old sinners, all journeying in faith, hope, and charity (or the

want of it) to the Cave of Amar-nâth in order to get the Great Ledger of Life settled up to date, and so to return scot free to the world, the flesh, and the devil in order to begin the old round all over again. I liked to think that crime sufficient to drag half Hindostan to the nethermost pit had been made over to those white gypsum cliffs, and that still, summer after summer, the wind flowers sprang from the crannies, and the forget-me-nots with their message of warning came to carpet the way for those eager feet seeking the impossible. I liked to see all the strange perversities and pieties displayed by the *jogis* and *gossains*. It was from one of the latter, a horrid old ruffian (so ridiculously like *Il Re Galant* 'uomo that we nicknamed him Victor Emanuel on the spot), that Taylor had first heard of the Flower of Forgiveness as the man styled it. He and the Doctor grew quite hot over the possible remission of sins; but the subsequent gift of one rupee sterling sent him away asseverating that none could filch from him the first-fruits of pilgrimage,—namely the opportunity of meeting a Protector of the Poor so virtuous, so generous, so full of the hoarded wisdom of ages. I recognised the old humbug in the crowd as we made our way to a sort of latticed gallery belonging to the Maharajah's guest-house, which gave on the tank where the fish are fed. He salaamed profoundly, and with a grin expressed his delight that, after all, the great Doctor *sahib* should be seeking forgiveness.

"'I seek the flower only, Pious One?' replied Taylor with a shrug of the shoulders.

"'Perhaps 'tis the same thing,' retorted Victor Emanuel with another salaam.

"The square tank was edged by humanity in the white and saffron robes of pilgrimage. Brimming up to the stone step worn smooth by generations of sinners, the waters of the spring lapped lazily, stirred by the myriads of small fish which in their

eagerness for the coming feast flashed hither and thither like meteors, to gather in radiating stars round the least speck on the surface, sometimes in their haste rising in scaly mounds above the water. The blare of a conch, and a clanging of discordant bells made all eyes turn to the platform in front of the temple, where the attendant Brahmins stood with high-heaped baskets of grain awaiting the sacrificial words about to be spoken by an old man, who, with one foot on the bank, spread his arms skywards. An old man of insignificant height, but with an indescribable dignity on which I remarked to my companion.

"'It is indescribable,' he assented, 'because it is compounded of factors not only wide as the poles asunder from you or me, but also from each other. Pride of twice-born trebly-distilled ancestry bringing a conviction of inherited worthiness; pride in hardly-acquired devotion giving birth to a sense of personal frailty. That is the Brahman whom we lump into a third-class railway carriage with the ruck of humanity, and then wonder,—hush! he is going to begin.'

"'Thou art Light! Thou art Immortal Life!' The voice with a tremor of emotion in it pierced the stillness for a second before it was shattered by a hoarse strident cry,—'Silence!'

"Taylor leaned forward, suddenly interested. 'You're in luck,' he whispered. 'I believe there is going to be a row of some sort.'

"Once more the cry rose harsher than before: 'Silence, Sukya! Thou art impure.'

"A stir in the crowd, and a visible straightening of the old man's back were the only results.

"'Thou art the Holiest Sacrifice! We adore Thee, adorable Sun!'

"'Silence!'

"This time the interruption took shape in a *jogi*, who, forcing his way through the dense ranks, emerged on the platform to stand pointing with denunciatory finger at the old Brah-

man. Naked, save for the cable of grass round his loins and the smearing of white ashes, with hair lime-bleached and plaited with hemp into a sort of *chignon*, no more ghastly figure could be conceived. The crowd, however, hailed him with evident respect, while a murmur of 'Gopi! 'tis Gopi the *bikshu* [religious beggar]' passed from mouth to mouth. This reception seemed to rouse the old man's wrath, for after one scornful glance at the newcomer he was about to continue his invocation to the sun, when the *jogi* striding forward flourished his mendicant's staff so close to the other's face that he perforce fell back.

"Before the crowd had grasped the deadly earnest of the scene, a lad of about sixteen, clad in the black antelope skin which marks a religious disciple, had leaped quivering with rage between the old man and his assailant.

"By George," muttered Taylor, "what a splendid young fellow!"

"He was indeed. Extraordinarily fair, even for the fairest race in India, he might have served as model for a young Perseus as he stood there, the antelope skin falling from his right shoulder leaving the sacred cord of the Brahman visible on his left, while his smooth round limbs showed in all their naked, vigorous young beauty.

"Stand off, Amra! who bade thee interfere?" cried the old man sternly. The bond between them was manifest by the alacrity with which the boy obeyed the command, for to the spiritual master implicit obedience is due. At the same moment the chief priest of the shrine, alarmed at an incident which might interfere with the expected almsgiving, hurried forward. Luckily the crowd kept the silence which characterises gregarious humanity in the East, so we could follow what was said.

"Wilt remove yonder drunken fanatic, or shall the worship of the Shining Ones be profaned?" asked the old Brahman savagely; and at a sign

from their chief the attendants stepped forward.

"But the *jogi* facing the crowd appealed direct to that fear of defilement which haunts the Hindoo's heart. 'Impure! Impure! Touch him not! Hear him not! Look not on him!' The vast concourse swayed and stirred, as with a confident air the *jogi* turned to the chief priest. 'These twelve years ago, O! *mohunt-jī*¹ thou knowest Gopi—Gopi the *bikshu*! since for twelve years I have been led hither by the Spirit, seeking speech, and finding silence! But now speech is given by the same Spirit. That man, Sukya, anchorite of Setanagar, is unclean, false to his race, to his vows, to the Shining Ones! I, Gopi the *bikshu*, will prove it.'

"Once again a murmur rose like the wind presaging a storm, and as the crowd surged closer to the temple a young girl in the saffron drapery of a pilgrim, took advantage of the movement to make her way to the platform with the evident intention of pressing to the old man's side; but she was arrested by the young Perseus, who with firm hands clasping hers, whispered something in her ear. She smiled up at him, and so they stood hand in hand, eager but confident, as the Brahman's voice clear with certainty dominated the confusion.

"Ay! Prove it! Prove that I, Sukya, taught of the great Swami, twice-born Brahman, faithful disciple, blameless householder, and pious anchorite in due turn as the faith demands, have failed once in the law without repentance and atonement! Lo! I swear by the Shining Ones that I stand before ye to-day body and soul holy to the uttermost.'

"God gie us a gude conceit o' oursels," muttered Taylor.

"The remark jarred on me painfully, for the spiritual exaltation in the man's face had nothing personal in it, nothing more selfish than the rapt confidence which glorified the young disciple's whole bearing as he gazed or

¹ Head of a religious community.

his master with the sort of blind adoration one sees in the eyes of a dog.

"Think! I am Sukya!" went on the high-pitched voice. "Would Sukya come between his brethren and the Shining Ones? I, chosen for the oblation by reason of virtue and learning; I, Sukya, journeying to Holy Amar-nath not for my own sake,—for I fear no judgment—but for the sake of the disciple, yonder boy Amra, betrothed to the daughter of my daughter, and vowed to the pilgrimage from birth."

"A yell of crackling laughter came from the *jogi* as he leapt to the bastion of the bathing-place, and so, raised within sight of all, struck an attitude of indignant appeal. 'When was an outcast vowed to pilgrimage? And by my *jogi's* vow I swear the boy Amra, disciple of Sukya, to be an outcast. A Sudra of Sudras! seeing that his mother, being twice-born, defiled her race with scum from beyond the seas.'

"By George!" muttered Taylor again, 'this is getting lively—for the scum.'

"Perhaps the Presence is becoming tired of this vulgar scene,' suggested an obsequious *chuprassi*, who had been devoted to our service by order of the Cashmere officials. But the Presences were deeply interested; for all that I should not care to witness such a sight again. The attention of the crowd, centred a moment before on the *jogi*, was turned now on the boy, who stood absolutely alone; for the girl, moved by the unreasoning habit of race, had dropped his hand at the first word and crept to her grandfather's side. I can see that young face still, awful in its terror, piteous in its entreaty.

"Thou liest, Gopi!" cried the Brahman gasping with passion; and at the words a gleam of hope crept to those hunted eyes. 'Prove it, I say; for I appeal to the Shining Ones whom I have served.'

"I accept the challenge," yelled the *jogi* with frantic gestures, while a perfect roar of assent, cries of devotion,

and prayers for guidance, rose from the crowd.

"Taylor looked round at me quickly. 'You are in luck. There is going to be a miracle. I saw that Gopi at Hurdwar once; he is a rare hand at them.' He must have understood my resentment at being thus recalled to the nineteenth century, for he added half to himself, 'Tis tragedy for all that,—to the boy.'

"An appeal for silence enabled us to hear that both parties had agreed to refer the question of birth to the sacred cord, with which every male of the three twice-born castes is invested. If the strands were of the pure cotton ordained by ritual to the Brahman, the boy should be held of pure blood; but the admixture of anything pointing to the despised Sudra would make him *anathema maranatha*, and render his master impure and therefore unfit to lead the devotions of others.

"I cannot attempt to describe the scene which followed; for even now, the confusion inseparable from finding yourself in surroundings which require explanation before they can fall into their appointed place in the picture, prevents me from remembering anything in detail,—anything but a surging sea of saffron and white, a babel of wild cries, '*Hurri! Gunga-ji! Dhurm! Dhurm!*' (Hollo! Ganges! the Faith! the Faith!) Then suddenly a roar,—'Gopi! a miracle! a miracle! Praise be to the Shining Ones!'

"It seemed but a moment ere the enthusiastic crowd had swept the *jogi* from his pedestal, and, crowned with jasmine chaplets, he was being borne high on men's shoulders to make a round of the various temples; while the keepers of the shrine swelled the tumult judiciously by cries of 'Oblations! offerings! The Shining Ones are present to-day!'

"In my excitement at the scene itself I had forgotten its cause, and was regretting the all too sudden ending of the spectacle, when Taylor touched me on the arm. 'The tragedy is about to begin! Look!'

"Following his eyes I saw, indeed, tragedy enough to make me forget what had gone before; yet I knew well that I did not, could not, fathom its depth or measure its breadth. Still, in a dim way I realised that the boy, standing as if turned to stone, had passed in those few moments from life as surely as if a physical death had struck him down; that he might indeed have been less forlorn had such been the case, since some one for their own sakes might then have given him six feet of earth. And now, even a cup of water, that last refuge of cold charity, was denied to him for ever, save from hands whose touch was to his Brahmanised soul worse than death. For him there was no future. For the old man who, burdened by the weeping girl, stood opposite him, there was no past. Nothing but a hell of defilement; of daily, hourly impurity for twelve long years. The thought was damnation.

"Come, Premi! Come!" he muttered, turning suddenly to leave the platform. "This is no place for us now. Quick! we must cleanse ourselves from deadly sin,—from deadly, deadly sin."

"They had reached the steps leading down to the tank when the boy, with a sob like that of a wounded animal, flung himself in agonised entreaty at his master's feet. "Oh, cleanse me, even me also, Oh my father!"

"The old man shrank back instinctively; yet there was no anger, only a merciless decision in his face. "Ask not the impossible! Thou art not alone impure; thou art uncleansable from birth,—yea! for ever and ever. Come, Premi, come, my child."

"I shall never forget the cry which echoed over the water, startling the pigeons from their evening rest amid the encircling trees. "Uncleansable for ever and ever!" Then in wild appeal from earth to heaven he threw his arms skyward. "Oh, Shining Ones! say I am the same Amra the twice-born, Amra, thy servant!"

"Peace! blasphemer!" interrupted

the Brahman sternly. "There are no Shining Ones for such as thou. Go! lest they strike thee dead in wrath."

"A momentary glimpse of a young face distraught by despair, of an old one firm in repudiation, and the platform lay empty of the passions which had played their parts on it as on a stage. Only from the distance came the discordant triumph of the *joyi's* procession.

"I besieged Taylor's superior knowledge by vain questions, to most of which he shook his head. "How can I tell!" he said somewhat fretfully. "The cord was manipulated in some way of course. For all that, there may be truth in Gopi's story. There is generally the devil to pay if a Brahman goes wrong, and she may have tried to save the boy's life by getting rid of him. If you want to know more, I'll send for Victor Emanuel. Five rupees will fetch some slight fraction of truth from the bottom of his well, and that as a rule is all we aliens can expect in these incidents."

"So the old ruffian came and sate ostentatiously far from our contaminating influences in the attitude of a bronze Buddha, his moustaches curled to his eyebrows, his large lips wreathed in solemn smiles. "It was a truly divine miracle," he said, blandly. "Gopi, the *bikshu*, never makes mistakes and performs neatly. Did the Presence observe how neatly? Within the cotton marking the Brahman came the hempen thread of the Kshatriya, inside again the woollen strand of the Vaisya; all three twice-born. But last of all, a strip of cow-skin defiling the whole."

"Why cow-skin?" I asked in my ignorance. "I always thought you held a cow sacred."

"Victor Emanuel beamed approval. "The little Presence is young but intelligent. He will doubtless learn much if he questions the right people judiciously. He will grow wise like the big Presence, who knows nearly as much as we know about some things,—but not all! The cow is sacred,

so the skin telling of the misfortune of the cow is *anathema*. Yea, 'twas a divine miracle. The money of the pious will flow to make the holy fat; at least that is what the Doctor *sahib* is thinking.'

"Don't set up for occult power on the strength of guessing palpable truths,' replied Taylor; 'that sort of thing does not amuse me; but the little *sahib* wants to know how much truth there was in Gopi's story.'

"Gopi knows,' retorted our friend with a grin. 'The Brahman saith the boy was gifted to him by a pious woman after the custom of thanksgiving. Gone five years old, wearing the sacred thread, versed in simple lore, intelligent, well-formed, as the ritual demands. Gopi saith the mother, his wife, was a bad walker even to the length of public bazaars. Her people sought her for years but she escaped them in big towns, and ere they found her she had gained safety for this boy by palming him off on Sukya. 'Twas easy for her, being a Brahmani. Of course they made her speak somewhat ere she fulfilled her life, but not the name of the anchorite she deceived. So Gopi, knowing from the mother's babbling of this mongrel's blasphemous name, and the vow of pilgrimage for the expiation of sins, hath come hither, led by the Spirit, every year. It is a tale of great virtue and edification.'

"But the boy! the wretched boy?' I asked eagerly. Taylor raised his eyebrows and watched my reception of the *jogi's* answer with a half pitying smile.

"Perhaps he will die; perhaps not. What does it matter? One born of such parents is dead to virtue from the beginning, and life without virtue is not life.'

"He might try Amar-nâth and the remission of sins you believe in so firmly,' remarked Taylor with another look at me.

"Victor Emanuel spat freely. 'There is no Amar-nâth for such as he, and the Presence knows that as

well as I do. No remission at all, even if he found the flower of forgiveness as the Doctor *sahib* hopes to do.'

"Upon my soul,' retorted Taylor impatiently, 'I believe the existence of the one is about as credible as the other. I shall have to swallow both if I chance upon either.'

"That may be; but not for the boy Amra. He will die and be damned in due course.'

"That seemed to settle the question for others, but I was haunted by the boy's look when he heard the words, 'Thou art uncleanable for ever and ever.'

"After all 'tis only a concentrated form of the feeling we all have at times,' remarked Taylor drily; 'even I should like to do away with a portion of my past. Besides all religions claim more or less a monopoly of repentance. They are no worse here than at home.'

"We journeyed slowly to Amar-nâth, watching the pilgrims pass us by on the road, but catching them up again each evening after long rambles over the hills in search of rare plants. It is three days' march by rights to Shisha Nag, or the Leaden Lake, where the pilgrimage begins in real earnest by the pilgrims, men, women, and children, divesting themselves of every stitch of raiment, and journeying stark naked through the snow and ice for two days; coming back, of course, clothed with righteousness. But Taylor, becoming interested over fungi in the chestnut woods of Chandanwarra, we paused there to hunt up all sorts of deathly-looking growths due to disease and decay. I was not sorry; for one pilgrim possessed by frantic haste to shift his sins to some scapegoat is very much like another pilgrim with the same desire; besides I grew tired of Victor Emanuel, who felt the cold extremely and was in consequence seldom sober, and extremely loquacious. I thought I had never seen such a dreary place as Shisha Nag, though the sun shone brilliantly on its cliffs and glaciers. I think it

must have been the irresponsiveness of the lake itself which deadened its beauties, for the water, surcharged with gypsum, lay in pale green stretches refusing a single reflection of the hills which held it so carefully.

"The next march was awful ; and in more than one place, half hidden by the flowers forcing their way through the snow, lay the corpses of pilgrims who had succumbed to the cold and the exposure.

"Pneumonia in five out of six cases,' remarked Taylor casually. 'If it were not for the *charas* [concoction of hemp] they drink the mortality would be fearful. I wonder what Exeter Hall would say to getting drunk for purposes of devotion.'

"At Punjtârni we met the returning pilgrims ; among others Victor, very sick and sorry for himself physically, but of intolerable moral strength. He told us, between the intervals of petitions for pills and potions, that the remaining fourteen miles to the Cave were unusually difficult, and had been singularly fatal that year. On hearing this Taylor, knowing my dislike to horrors, proposed taking a path across the hills instead of keeping to the orthodox route. Owing to scarcity of water and fuel the servants and tents could only go some five miles further along the ravine, so this suggestion would involve no change of plan. He added that there would also be a greater chance of finding 'that blessed anemone.' I don't think I ever saw so much drunkenness, or so much devotion, as I saw that evening at Punjtârni. It was hard indeed to tell where the one began and the other ended ; for excitement, danger, and privation lent their aid to drugs, and a sense of relief to both. The very cliffs and glaciers resounded with enthusiasm, and I saw Sukya and Premi taking their part with the rest as if nothing had happened.

"Taylor and I started alone next morning. We were to make a long round in search of the Flower of Forgiveness and came back upon the Cave

towards afternoon. The path, if path it could be called, was fearful. Taylor however was untiring, and at the slightest hint of hope would strike off up the most break-neck places, leaving me to rejoice in him as best I could. Yet not a trace did we find of the anemone. Taylor grew fretful, and when we reached the snow slope leading to the Cave, he declared it would be sheer waste of time for him to go up.

"Get rid of your sins, if you want to, by all means,' he said ; 'I've seen photographs of the place, and it's a wretched imposture even as a spectacle. You have only to keep up the snow for a mile and turn to the left. You'll find me somewhere about these cliffs on your return ; and don't be long, for the going before us is difficult.' So I left him poking into every crack and cranny.

"I could scarcely make up my mind if I was impressed or disappointed with the Cave. Its extreme insignificance was, it is true, almost ludicrous. Save for a patch of red paint and a shockingly bad attempt at a stone image of Siva's bull, there was nothing to distinguish this hollow in the rock from a thousand similar ones all over the Himalayas. But this very insignificance gave mystery to the fact that hundreds of thousands of the conscience-stricken had found consolation here. '*What went ye out into the wilderness to see ?*' As I stood for an instant at the entrance before retracing my steps, I could not but think that here was a wilderness indeed ; a wilderness of treacherous snow and ice-bound rivers peaked and piled up tumultuously like frozen waves against the darkening sky. The memory of Taylor's warning not to be late made me try what seemed a shorter and easier path than the one by which I had come ; but ere long the usual difficulties of short cuts cropped up, and I had eventually to limp back to the slope with a badly cut ankle which bled profusely despite my rough efforts at bandaging. The loss of blood was sufficient to make me feel quite sick and faint, so that it

startled me to come suddenly on Taylor sooner than I expected. He was half kneeling, half sitting on the snow; his coat was off and his face bent over something propped against his arm.

"'It's that boy,' he said shortly as I came up. 'I found him just after you left, lying here,—to rest he says. It seems he has been making his way to the Cave ever since that day, without bite or sup, by the hills,—God knows how—to avoid being turned back by the others. And now he is dying, and there's an end of it.'

"'The boy,—not Amra!' I cried, bending in my turn.

"'Sure enough on Taylor's arm, with Taylor's coat over his wasted body, lay the young disciple. His great luminous eyes looked out of a face whence even death could not drive the beauty, and his breath came in laboured gasps.

"'Brandy! I have some here,' I suggested in hot haste, moved to the idiotic suggestion by that horror of standing helpless which besets us all in presence of the Destroyer.

"'Taylor looked at the boy with a grave smile and shook his head. 'To begin with he wouldn't touch it; besides he is past all that sort of thing. No one could help him now.' He paused, shifting the weight a little on his arm.

"'The Presence will grow tired holding me,' gasped the young voice feebly. 'If the *sahib* will put a stone under my head and cover me with some snow, I will be able to crawl on by and by when I am rested. For it is close,—quite close.'

"'Very close,' muttered the Doctor under his breath. Suddenly he looked up at me, saying in a half apologetic way, 'I was wondering if you and I couldn't get him up there,—to Amar-nâth I mean. Life has been hard on him; he deserves an easy death.'

"'Of course we can,' I cried in a rush of content at the suggestion, as I hobbled round to get to the other side and so help the lad to his legs.

"'Hollo,' asked Taylor with a quick professional glance. 'What have you

done to your ankle? Sit down and let me overhaul it.'

"'In vain I made light of it, in vain I appealed to him. He peremptorily forbade my stirring for another hour, asserting that I had injured a small artery and without caution might find difficulty in reaching the tents, as it would be impossible for him to help me much on the sort of ground over which we had to travel.

"'But the boy, Taylor!—the boy!' I pleaded. 'It would be awful to leave him here.'

"'Who said he was to be left?' retorted the Doctor crossly. 'I'm going to carry him up as soon as I've finished bandaging your leg. Don't be in such a blessed hurry.'

"'Carry him! You can't do it up that slope, strong as you are, Taylor,—I know you can't.'

"'Can't?' he echoed as he stood up from his labours. 'Look at him and say can't again,—if you can.'

"'I looked and saw that the boy, but half conscious, yet restored to the memory of his object by the touch of the snow on which Taylor had laid him while engaged in bandaging my foot, had raised himself painfully on his hands and knees and was struggling upwards, blindly, doggedly.

"'Hang it all,' continued the Doctor fiercely, 'isn't that sight enough to haunt a man if he doesn't try? Besides I may find that precious flower,—who knows?'

"'As he spoke he stooped with the gentleness not so much of sympathy, as of long practice in suffering, over the figure which, exhausted by its brief effort, already lay prostrate on the snow.

"'What is—the Presence—going—to do?' moaned Amra doubtfully as he felt the strong arms close round him.

"'You and I are going to find the remission of sins together at Amar-nâth,' replied the Presence with a bitter laugh.

"'The boy's head fell back on the Doctor's shoulder as if accustomed to

the resting-place. 'Amar-nâth!' he murmured. 'Yes! I am Amar-nâth.'

"So I sat there helpless, and watched them up the slope. Every slip, every stumble, seemed as if it were my own. I clenched my hands and set my teeth as if I too had part in the supreme effort, and when the straining figure passed out of sight I hid my face and tried not to think. It was the longest hour I ever spent before Taylor's voice holloing from the cliff above roused me to the certainty of success.

"And the boy?' I asked eagerly.

"Dead by this time I expect,' replied the Doctor shortly. 'Come on,—there's a good fellow—we haven't a moment to lose. I must look again for the flower to-morrow.'

"But letters awaiting our return to camp recalled him to duty on account of cholera in the regiment; so there was an end of anemone hunting. The 101st suffered terribly, and Taylor was in consequence hotter than ever over experiments. The result you know."

"Yes, poor fellow! but the anemone? I don't understand how it came here."

My friend paused. "That is the odd thing. I was looking after the funeral and all that, for Taylor and I were great friends,—he left me that

herbarium in memory of our time in Cashmere—well, when I went over to the house about an hour before to see everything done properly, his bearer brought me one of those little flat straw baskets the natives use. It had been left during my absence, he said, by a young Brahman who assured him that it contained something which the great Doctor *sahib* had been very anxious to possess, and which was now sent by some one to whom he had been very kind.

"You told him the *sahib* was dead, I suppose?' I asked.

"This slave informed him that the master had gained freedom, but he replied it was no matter, as all his task was this. On opening the basket I found a gourd such as the disciples carry round for alms, and in it, planted among gypsum *débris*, was that anemone; or rather that is a part of it, for I put some in Taylor's coffin."

"Ah! I presume the *gosain*—Victor Emanuel I think you called him—sent the plant; he knew of the Doctor's desire?"

"Perhaps. The bearer said the Brahman was a very handsome boy; very fair, dressed in the usual black antelope skin of the disciple. It is a queer story anyhow,—is it not?"

OFF THE AZORES.

To the geographers of the ancient world the Azores were unknown. From the number of Phœnician coins found in Corvo, one of the north-western group, it is believed that those bold sailors must have visited them, and possibly left a settlement there. But if the ancients knew them, they have left no record of their knowledge. The Canaries they knew, and called them the Fortunate Islands, pleasing themselves with the pretty fancy that there after death the shades of their great heroes dwelt, happy and careless in a land of eternal summer, as in some

—lucid interspace of world and world,
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a
wind,
Nor ever falls the least white star of snow,
Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,
Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to
mar
Their sacred everlasting calm.

But of the Azores there is no hint even till the twelfth century, when Edrisi, the famous Arabian traveller, made for Roger, King of Sicily, a mighty globe of silver, and placed these islands thereon. Yet even Edrisi knew no name for them, and in the work he wrote to explain his globe he gave them none. We believe the group of islands he visited in the western seas to have been the Azores because he mentions their exact number, nine, and because he writes of a species of sparrowhawk as being very common on them, and the name Azores signifies in the Portuguese tongue the Hawk Islands.

Not till three centuries later did they become really known to Europeans. In 1439 Joshua Van der Berg, a native of Bruges, on a voyage from Lisbon to the African coast, was driven down to them by stress of weather, and

carried the news back to the Portuguese court. Cabral, the future discoverer of Brazil, was forthwith dispatched to spy out the new land, and his report being favourable, the work of colonising began. Edrisi has written of these islands as showing traces of having once been the home of a considerable people, and still in his day inhabited; but the Portuguese colonists seem to have found no inhabitants but the sparrowhawks. Themselves clearly of volcanic growth, the Azores have always suffered sadly from intestine commotions; and very probably the people and the cities of whom the Arabian wrote had perished "so as by fire" long before the Fleming's visit; perhaps even the very islands Edrisi saw had gone down again into the great deep whence they came, and others had taken their place. Later travellers have recorded more than one such rising and setting. On December 10th, 1720, one John Robison, master of a small English trading-vessel, saw a fire break out of the sea off Terceira, and out of the fire an island, as duly reported in the thirty-second volume of the *Philosophical Transactions*. Again, in the present century, the captain of an English man-of-war was witness to a similar birth almost on the same spot, accompanied, like the former, with fire and smoke and a noise as of thunder and great guns. The captain, perhaps with some confused memories of Milton, gave to the island the name of Sabrina; but it did not bear its name long, being soon washed back into limbo by the angry waves. Then, a year or two later, a certain captain of dragoons, voyaging in search of health, beheld a similar phenomenon: "a most awful and tremendous explosion of smoke and flames," vomiting cinders and ashes, stones of an

immense size, and fish, "some nearly roasted, and others as if boiled." It will be remembered that when H.M.S. *Barham* was carrying Sir Walter Scott on that sad journey to the Mediterranean, she came to a similar birth some two days sail from Malta. Four months earlier Graham's Island had risen from the sea, and, as though waiting only for the Great Magician, after he had passed sank back into it.

In 1580 the Azores came under the power of Spain, and in the history of the next twenty years their name is frequent as the favourite battle-ground of the English and Spanish fleets. The partiality was, indeed, mainly on the side of the former, and for a good reason. These islands lay right in the track of all vessels sailing to and from that enchanted region known then to all men as the Spanish Main. On the highest peak of Terceira, whence in clear weather the sea could be scanned for leagues round, were raised two columns, and by them a man watched night and day. When he saw any sails approaching from the west, he set a flag upon the western column, one for each sail; if they came from the east a similar sign was set up on the eastern column. Hither in those days came up out of the mysterious western seas the great argosies laden with gold and silver and jewels, with silks and spices and rare woods, wrung at the cost of thousands of harmless lives and cruelties unspeakable from the fair lands which lie between the waters of the Caribbean Sea and the giant wall of the Andes. And hither, when England too began to turn her eyes to El Dorado, came the great war-galleons of Spain and Portugal to meet these precious cargoes and convoy them safe into Lisbon or Cadiz before those terrible English sea-wolves could get scent of the prize.

When English ships first touched at the Azores we have no certain record. About 1563 the Spaniards found five brigs from Bristol and Barnstaple loading wood there, clapped the crews into irons, and carried them and their

cargoes into Cadiz. But the islands may have been known to our sailors before this. The great impulse given to maritime activity by Henry VIII. which began with William Hawkins's voyages to Guinea and Brazil in 1530, had sent the English flag into many strange waters and on many strange errands. There is no use in mincing the matter; we were terrible water-thieves in those times. All was fish that came to our net; French, Spaniards, Dutch, our men had at them all, with a splendid disregard of the rights of property and international amities. To be sure the booty we took from our neighbours they in their turn had taken from the rightful owners, and with even less ceremony. There was no open war with Spain till 1588, but Elizabeth had a most convenient way of publicly deprecating the riotous acts of her subjects, when she found it convenient to do so, and roundly encouraging them in private. An unqueenly trick, perhaps, and apt to confuse the law of nations; yet mightily useful to her, and to England. These sea-roving ancestors of ours were, it should never be forgotten, the real founders of the English Empire. To talk of them only as rovers and buccaneers, which some dealers in history have affected to do, is not only grossly unfair to the memory of many great and good men, but shows also a most inadequate conception of the facts of the case and of the conditions and circumstances of the time. It is true enough that there were some among them who had no thought but to enrich themselves by plunder, and cared not how the plunder was got or whence. But the best of them had larger and nobler aims than this. They were fighting for their country and their religion, for in those days Englishmen were not ashamed to be fond and proud of both. Neither could exist, as Englishmen were determined they should exist, while Spain remained what she then was; and the power of Spain could be broken only on the sea—only by striking at the source of that vast golden stream she drew from

the mines of the New World to keep the Old in chains. While it suited their Queen's policy that the men who set themselves to this vital work should do so at their own risk, at their own risk they did it, and found, as we know well, good reason not to quarrel with the conditions. The most part of the famous deeds enshrined in the immortal pages of Hakluyt, which read almost like the exploits of the heroes of Greek myth or Northern saga, were done by private venture, helped sometimes by the purses of such men as Cecil and Walsingham, Essex and Leicester, or even of the Queen herself, but practically undertaken at the risk of private and not wealthy individuals. The labourer is worthy of his hire. They served their country nobly, and paid themselves for their service, not at their country's cost. In all their direct dealings with the Indians themselves, the rightful lords of all this treasure, they bore themselves—with the one black exception, let it be owned, of the Guinea slave-trade—justly and mercifully, in such striking contrast to the white men who had forerun them, that the name of Englishman grew to be as much loved on those coasts as the name of Spaniard to be hated. And indeed the cause they fought for was as much the cause of those poor persecuted creatures as their own. To fight the Spanish devils was as much their glory as their profit; as much their duty to humanity as their duty to their country. The English sailors, half mad with righteous fury at the awful tales they had heard and had but too good reason to believe, were as ready to lay their little cockboats alongside some great war-galleon, bristling with a triple tier of guns and crammed to the teeth with musketeers and archers, as to cut out a defenceless plate-ship from the harbours of Chili or Peru. But after the large spirit and eloquence in which Charles Kingsley and Mr. Froude have done those old heroes justice, they need no third defender.

The first Englishman whose exploits at the Azores have made a figure in

history was George Fenner, a well-known name in the sea-stories of the time. We have no particulars of him, where he was born, or when, or of what family. His name is first known in connection with these islands, but afterwards he became a man of mark. On the great day of the Armada he commanded the *Leicester*, one of the finest ships of the English van, and is especially noted by the old chronicler for his bravery in the most furious and bloody moment of the modern Salamis. He is described there as a man, like Aulus the Dictator, of many fights; and this fight off the Azores was the most famous of them.

He sailed from Plymouth on December 10th, 1566, with three ships, the *Castle of Comfort*, the *May Flower*, and the *George*, and a pinnace. Their tonnage is not given, but there is reason to believe that the largest of them was not of a hundred tons burden. Edward Fenner, George's brother, was captain of the *May Flower*, and Robert Curtis of the *George*; the Admiral, or General, as the senior officer was indiscriminately called, hoisted his flag on the *Castle of Comfort*. The Guinea coast was their goal, and their object was trade in such commodities as they could come by, including, probably, some of those black commodities William Hawkins first taught Englishmen to look for. After a short stay at Teneriffe, they made Cape Verde on January 19th, and here their troubles began. They found the negroes minded rather to fight than to trade; through no misconduct of their own, but in revenge, so they were told, for a raid made a short while before by an English slaver. There was some sharp and rather dangerous fighting, the negroes using arrows steeped in an uncurable poison. "If the arrow," we read, "enter within the skin and draw blood, and except the poison be presently sucked out, or the place where any man is hurt be forthwith cut away, he dieth within four days, and within three hours after they be hurt or pricked, where-

soever it be, although but at the little toe, yet it striketh up to the heart, and taketh away the stomach, and causeth the party marvellously to vomit, being able to brook neither meat nor drink." Incurable or not, four of Fenner's men died from the effects, and another was only saved by the amputation of his arm. At Buona Vista and Mayo they fared better, but at St. Jago narrowly escaped a snare set for them by some Portuguese men-of-war; and so, thinking those parts rather too hot for them, after a visit to Fuego, they bore away for the Azores. On April 18th they watered at Flores, and on May 8th dropped anchor off Terceira.

It was verily a case of the fire for the frying-pan. The morning after their arrival came in sight a Portuguese galliass of four hundred tons, with a crew of three hundred men and mounted with many guns, some throwing shot as large as a man's head. She was escorted by two caravels, each well armed and manned; and Fenner saw there was hot work in store for the *Castle of Comfort*. It was to be even hotter than he expected. The galliass was reinforced in the course of the day by fresh crews from the shore, and on the next morning by four great caravels more, or armadas as they were called, the word *armada* originally signifying any armed force. The enemy now mustered seven ships, of which three were larger than the Englishman, and one of them four times as large. Neither the *May Flower* nor the *George* could help their consort. Probably they were too small to have been of much service against such big game, though the *George* was able to give a very good account of herself in a brush with some of the caravels. But through the most part of the time the wind kept them out of the fight, as it did our Dutch allies on the great day of La Hogue, and George Fenner had to play his own game as best he could. He certainly contrived to play it pretty well. For three days the little English

ship kept her seven assailants at bay, having sometimes as many as three in hand at once. In the night they left her alone, but she had little time to spare for rest, "having as much as we could do to mend our ropes, and to strengthen our bulwarks, putting our trust in God, and resolving ourselves rather to die in our defence than to be taken by such wretches." On the third morning, the 11th of May, all the seven came down together on the little *Castle* to make an end of her. "Holloing and whooping" they came down, "making account either to board us or else to sink us: but although our company was but small, yet lest they should see us any whit dismayed, when they hollowed we hollowed also as fast as they, and waved to them to come and board us if they durst, but that they would not, seeing us still so courageous: and having given us that day four fights, at night they forsook us with shame, as they came to us at the first with pride." "Then," goes on the old chronicle, "we directed our course for our own country"; and so ended the first of those great sea-fights which were to make the name of the English sailor a name of might in all waters.

Twenty years later Raleigh, then on the flood-tide of his fortune and with all his hundred irons hot in the fire, despatched a couple of vessels to the Azores—the *Mary Sparke* of fifty tons, and the *Serpent* of thirty-five. John Evesham, gentleman, one of the company, tells the story of the voyage with a most serene simplicity of language. "Not greatly respecting whom we took, so that we might have enriched ourselves, which was the cause of this our travail," we "flew false colours, and thereby made some pretty pickings, including the governors of St. Michael and the Straits of Magellan." On their way home they fell in with one of the Spanish plate-fleets of twenty-four sail, escorted by two carracks of twelve hundred and a thousand tons. Right into the midst of this goodly company dashed the Englishmen

with their prize in tow, and for two-and-thirty hours fought them right and left, as they cared to come on, with the utmost content and cheerfulness. But powder running short, and the big carracks proving rather too big, the *Mary Sparke* and the *Serpent* at last gave over, and, with their prize still safe, made good their way home into Plymouth, where they were received, as was fitting, with great honour, all the town and the countryside turning out to welcome them with firing of guns and music, "with shouts and clapping, and noise of weeping loud."

In 1592 Raleigh picked up a finer prize still in these waters, and but for the misadventure with the fair Throckmorton, would have picked it up with his own hands. He had indeed already sailed, but was recalled by the Queen, his fleet going on under charge of Frobisher and Sir John Burrough. The former had orders to cruise off the Spanish coast; the latter was sent to the Azores. Both were successful. Frobisher took, off St. Lucas, a great Biscayan of six hundred tons, laden with iron-work worth several thousand pounds. But the great prize fell to his colleague, the *Madre de Dios* of sixteen hundred tons, with a cargo valued at one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, precious stones, ivory and ebony, rare spices and drugs, porcelain ware, Turkey carpets, and embroideries, silks, cloths, linens, and calicoes, the largest and richest prize ever brought into England, richer even and larger than the *St. Philip*, the great Portuguese carrack taken by Drake off the same islands five years before.

But the Azores were not always destined to bring luck to Raleigh. His next venture there was in 1597, when a great fleet was sent out under the command of Essex, with Raleigh and Lord Thomas Howard as vice-admirals. Their prime purpose was to destroy the new Armada Philip had got ready against our coasts, which was believed to be lying in Ferrol. But of course the plate-fleets and rich carracks gene-

rally were not to be neglected, and there was some talk of taking the Azores themselves. The expedition was something very like a *fiasco*, and had it not been for Raleigh would have been quite one, and a dangerous one to boot. A few prizes were picked up, and Fayal was taken. But the great plate-fleet was missed, solely through the perversity of Essex; and while the English squadrons were cruising aimlessly about, the Armada sailed from the Groyne for our defenceless coasts. Happily for us it was the story of 1588 over again. "The Lord," as old Salvation Yeo said on that glorious July morning when the Spanish admiral signalled to cut sails and run, "the Lord was fighting for His people." *Afflavit Deus et dissipati sunt.*

But the most memorable of all the actions fought off the Azores, the one which poetry and history have vied with each other in adorning, was that between a Spanish fleet of fifty-three sail and a single English ship, the *Revenge*, commanded by Sir Richard Grenville. The fame of this wonderful fight was spread abroad into all lands, and Grenville and his Englishmen have taken their place now in Valhalla beside Leonidas and his Spartans. Raleigh published the first account anonymously in 1590, the year of the fight, and this was republished with the writer's name eight years later by Hakluyt in his second volume. Sir William Monson, himself a Paladin of those days, was another of its historians, and Linschoten, the Dutch traveller, who was in the islands at the time, gave his version of it. Sir Richard Hawkins, the Complete Seaman as men called him, son of Admiral John, enshrined it in his *Observations*, which were not published however till 1622, after his death. Gervase Markham, still remembered for his writings on husbandry and field-sports, and better qualified perhaps to handle the *Georgics* than the *Æneid*, but like so many of his time dexterous at rhyming, published a poem in Sir Richard's honour. Bacon, in his *Considerations Touching a*

War with Spain, styled the fight "memorable even beyond credit, and to the height of some heroic fable." In later days Hume, a man certainly not given to sentiment, thought it "so singular as to merit a more particular relation," and gave it one with the help of Raleigh. Charles Kingsley has praised it in a spirit of enthusiasm worthy of the heroes themselves; Mr. Froude has given it a special place of honour in his fine eulogy on *England's Forgotten Worthies*, which did something in its day to bring them back into memory; how nobly our Poet Laureate has sung of it every man, woman, and child should know.

Sir Richard Grenville was a Cornishman of noble blood, tracing his line directly back, so the family pedigree said, to Rollo Duke of Normandy. He had lands at Kilhampton in the north of Cornwall, and at Stow near Bideford in Devon, where he seems to have mostly lived when on shore. His father Roger, himself a famous sailor, was one of those who went down in the *Mary Rose* off Portsmouth quay under the King's own eyes. Young Richard was fighting the Turks under Maximilian in Hungary when only sixteen years old. In 1571 he represented Cornwall in Parliament, and in 1577 was made high sheriff of the county and a knight. In 1585 he commanded the squadron which took out Raleigh's first colony to Virginia, and in the following year sailed there again with supplies for the settlers, whom, half starved, and sadly diminished in numbers, Drake had meanwhile carried home. In both voyages he laid hands on a fat prize or two, and also won the reputation of being rather a hard master to serve with. Ralph Lane, the captain of the Virginian colonists, made complaints to Walsingham of Sir Richard's tyrannical conduct and intolerable pride, and desired to be excused from ever serving under him again in any circumstances or on any service. Sir Richard had himself something to say on the other side, so Lane's evidence must be taken

for what it is worth. But there is little doubt that our hero was of a temper unusually imperious and masterful even for those times, when discipline practically meant obedience to the stronger hand. Linschoten tells a curious story of him. "This Sir Richard Greenfield¹" he says, "was a great and a rich gentleman in England, but he was a man very unquiet in his mind, and greatly affected to war . . . He had performed many valiant acts, and was greatly feared in these islands, and known of every man, but of nature very severe, so that his own people hated him for his fierceness, and spake very hardly of him. . . . He was of so hardy a complexion, that as he continued among the Spanish captains while they were at dinner or supper with him, he would carouse three or four glasses of wine, and in a bravery take the glasses between his teeth and crash them in pieces and swallow them down, so that often times the blood ran out of his mouth without any harm at all unto him, and this was told me by divers credible persons that many times stood and beheld him." This story has naturally puzzled people much. Kingsley, loyal always to his Elizabethan heroes and disliking idle tales of any man, excuses it by a fit of indignation as some tale of Spanish cruelty or oppression. A writer in Lardner's *Cyclopædia*—one would be sorry to think he was Southey—notes it as merely an act of drunken bravery common to the time. There, at any rate, is the story in the pages of the worthy Dutchman, to be taken or left as readers please. In 1588, when England was arming for the Spaniard, Sir Richard had an especial commission from the Queen to guard the Devon and Cornwall coasts, and in the roll of the musters for the latter county, returned at fifteen hundred trained men, he comes first with three hundred and three armed with muskets and bows and arrows.

¹ The name was spelt in all manner of ways then, as the custom was. Raleigh spells it *Grinville*; Hawkins *Greenfield* and *Greafeld*; Monson, *Greenville*; Bacon, *Greenwill*.

Then came this great fight and Sir Richard's death in his fifty-second year. Four sons and five daughters survived him, and his wife, "the fair St. Leger." She died in 1623, and was buried in the Grenvilles' aisle in the church of Bideford of which the family were patrons. The parish register records her as "wife to that famous warrior Sir Richard Grenville, knight, also deceased, being in his lifetime the Spaniards' terror." One of his grandsons was that Sir Bevil Grenville, whom men called the English Bayard. He died as bravely as his grandsire, leading his pikemen against Waller's horse at Lansdowne. But Sir Bevil's younger brother, another Sir Richard, did not bear so good a name. Like all his line he was brave enough, but corrupt, cruel, and mischievous. If his brother was the Bayard, he might have been called the Boar of the West.

In 1590 Philip was busy with his new Armada. The first had failed woefully, it was true, but it had failed, so the Spaniards plumed themselves, by no inferiority of ships or men. The winds and the waves had destroyed it, not English valour or seamanship. The Pope and his priests would no doubt arrange matters better with Heaven next time. Still it behoved him on his part to neglect no precautions; and one of these was to stop the plate-fleet for that year. One, and an unusually rich one, was lying at Havannah ready for the homeward voyage, but the risk of losing so much material at such a time was too great. For somehow or other, despite his high words, Philip could not altogether blink the sad fact that when English and Spanish sailors met on the high seas, it was not as a rule the former who got the worst of it. So the plate-fleet was ordered to winter at Havannah, and even not to sail next year till much later than usual, the chances of bad weather being preferred to the English guns. Elizabeth had been advised of all this, and accordingly in June, 1591, a bold move was made to spoil Philip's game. A squadron under Lord Thomas

Howard, which had been cruising all the year about those waters, was ordered to the Azores; and a fresh one under Lord Cumberland was sent to the Spanish coasts, in case the prize should slip through Howard's hands. But Philip knew what was going on as well as Elizabeth; and in August, about the time when the Havannah fleet might be looked for at the Azores, he dispatched a part of his Armada down to those islands. On the last day of the month the two fleets came in sight of each other off Flores, the westernmost island of the group.

Howard had six men-of-war with him and nine or ten smaller vessels, carrying few or no guns, victuallers, as they were called, and pinnaces. His fighting ships were the *Defiance*, carrying the Admiral's flag, the *Bonaventure*, the *Lion* (in which George Fenner was sailing once again for his old battleground), the *Foresight*, the *Crane*, and the *Revenge*, flying Sir Richard Grenville's flag as Vice-Admiral. Of these the *Foresight* and *Crane* were of small size and light armament. The *Bonaventure* was of six hundred tons, an old ship but a good one. She had been with Drake in the West Indies and had carried his flag in the memorable raid on Cadiz in 1587. Though she had seen now thirty-one years' hard service, the sailors vowed there was not a stronger ship in the world. The *Revenge*, of five hundred tons, was built about 1579 under Hawkins's special supervision, and her lines were thought so highly of that, after the great Armada where she carried Drake's flag, she had been selected by a committee consisting of Lord Howard of Effingham, High Admiral of the Fleet, Drake, Hawkins, Wynter, and other notables, as the model for four new line-of-battle ships. But she was an unlucky vessel, for all her qualities. She had been aground several times, and once had sprung so bad a leak off the Spanish coast that she was with difficulty brought home. The *Defiance* and the *Lion* were probably about the same size. The Spaniards counted fifty-

three sail, all galleons of war; the largest was the *San Philip*, of fifteen hundred tons, carrying eighty-two guns. The Admiral was Don Alphonso Bassan, brother to the Marquess of Santa Cruce, a famous grandee.

Howard had warning of the enemy's coming. Captain Middleton in a swift cruiser had brought the news from Cumberland's squadron, and only just in time. Half the crews were on shore, and barely half of them fit for service. In the *Revenge* there were ninety sick; in the *Bonaventure* not enough in health to handle her main-sail. The whole fleet indeed was in a bad way, "grown foul," says Raleigh, "un-roomaged, and scarcely able to bear any sail for want of ballast, having been six months at the sea before." Howard clearly saw that on this one occasion discretion was the better part of valour. He gave orders for all to go on board as quickly as might be, and weigh anchor. About this part of the story there is some confusion. It is not clear whether Sir Richard could not or would not obey the Admiral's signal. Every one knows the famous words in which he commended his soul to God and his fame to posterity, as he lay dying on the Spaniard's deck. But in Linschoten's version of the story the speech is said to end thus: "But the others of my company have done as traitors and dogs, for which they shall be reproached all their lives, and have a shameful name for ever." This conclusion has been prudently omitted from all the English versions, and Raleigh, who wrote several years before Linschoten, says nothing of it. The original Dutch story, in which these words are said to occur, I have never seen, and should be little the wiser if I had; but in the Latin translation published three years later, in 1599, at the Hague, it is said that Sir Richard, before composing himself to die, declared that he had been basely and cowardly abandoned by his comrades.¹ To talk of men like Howard

and Fenner as cowards is ridiculous. But it is clear, from the trouble Raleigh takes to excuse both parties, that there was some disputing afterwards, when it was seen what this one ship had done, what might have been the issue had the whole squadron given battle. It seems indeed, from his account, that they did what they could do to save their comrade. Thomas Vavasour, in the *Foresight*, especially distinguished himself, fighting his ship for two hours as near the *Revenge* as the weather would permit him, and only at last sheering off when he saw that he could not save Sir Richard and would have much ado to save himself. And the others are also said to have done what wind and weather and their own condition would let them, until they were parted by night. Raleigh was Grenville's particular friend, and a kinsman as well, so he is certain to have said all he could on his side, and as he allows that "if all the rest had entered, all had been lost," the shade of Lord Thomas may fairly be suffered to rest in peace. Sir Richard's well-known temper and his disappointment at seeing so great a fight fought in vain, may no less fairly excuse his hasty words against his comrades—if he ever uttered them.

But to leave this part of the story, which is not the best part, and come to the certain facts. The *Revenge*, having to get her ninety sick men on board, was the last to weigh anchor, and scarcely had she done so, when the squadron of Seville came up on her weather bow and cut her off from the rest of her comrades. The master advised Sir Richard to cut his main-sail and go about, trusting to the speed of the *Revenge* which was notorious. But this the Vice-Admiral utterly refused to do, vowing that he would rather die then and there than dishonour himself, his country, and her

ad mortem sese composuit, testatus primum ignavia fedissima sociorum derelictum se, ac proditum, mori fidelem Regine, ac hactenus gloriæ, plurimæ compotem, summa cum animi sui tranquillitate."

¹ The passage runs thus: "Mira animi constantia tandem, quod lethale vulnus esset,

Majesty's flag. So between the two great Spanish squadrons the little English ship held her course, till the huge *San Philip* coming up to windward of her, took the wind out of her sails and ran aboard her.

Then the great fight began, at three o'clock on that August afternoon. The *San Philip* soon had enough of it, "utterly misliking her first entertainment," a broadside of crossbar-shot from the lower tier of the *Revenge*. But there were four other galleons by this time at work, two on the larboard side and two on the starboard, one of them "a very mighty and puissant ship." The Spaniards were all fully manned, some of them carrying as many as five or eight hundred soldiers besides their crews. The *Revenge* had only a few gentlemen-volunteers over and above her crew, of whom ninety, as I have said, were lying sick below: "In ours there were none at all besides the mariners but the servants of the commanders, and some few voluntary gentlemen only." Many times the enemy tried to board, but were always beaten off, into the sea or back into their own ships. All that afternoon, and through the fair summer night till the sun rose again, the fight raged. One by one as the Spanish galleons fell back from their terrible little foe, others came up to fill their places, so that she had never less than two alongside her through all those awful hours, and ere the morning dawned it is counted that fifteen several attempts had been made to board. But so rough was the handling they got that at daybreak the general feeling throughout the Spanish fleet was rather in favour of a compromise than any further engagement.

The dawning light showed no comfort. Not a friend was in sight but the little *Pilgrim*, commanded by Jacob Whiddon, who had hovered all night round the combatants, and in the morning bearing up for the *Revenge*, was "hunted like a hare amongst many ravenous hounds, but escaped." On the previous afternoon another of the

victuallers, the *George Noble* of London, had made her way to the *Revenge*, and her captain, whose name one would be glad to know, had asked Sir Richard "what he would command him"; but the hero bade him shift for himself and leave him to his own fate. Two of the Spanish ships had been sunk, and the rest lay in a ring round the *Revenge*, waiting for the end, but daring no more to come near her.

As the wolves in winter circle
Round the leaguer on the heath.

The end was not far off. Forty of the Englishmen had been killed and Sir Richard himself mortally wounded; all the powder was done; the pikes all bent or broken; the masts all gone by the board, the rigging and bulwarks all shot away, and there were six feet of water in the hold. So lay the *Revenge*, a mere hulk, washed from side to side by the heaving waves. Then Sir Richard bid the master-gunner to sink the ship. And the man, who was made of the same stuff as his captain, would have done so had not the others stayed him. They had fought for their country, they said, like brave men, and it was surely best that such as were left of them should live to fight for her again. The Spaniards were brave men too, and would treat them courteously. In the end this counsel prevailed, though the valiant gunner would have put an end to his own life at least had he not been forcibly withheld and lashed into his cabin. As for Sir Richard himself he was past disputing any more. He had been twice badly shot, through the body and the head, and was sinking fast. So the *Revenge* yielded, and the Spaniards sent their boats alongside her, very cautiously, for they knew not what the English captain might do in his death-fit. They bore him carefully out of his ship, which was streaming with blood and filled with bodies of dead and wounded men, like a slaughter-house; and they took the others off, promising them a reason-

able ransom, and in the meantime honourable treatment. The Spanish Admiral, like a true and valiant gentleman, received his prisoner with great courtesy, praising him for his courage and for the wondrous fight his men had made against such terrible odds. And all things were done to give him ease, and, if possible, to heal him of his grievous wounds. But no fair words nor surgery could save Sir Richard. He died on the second or third day after his removal, and all the Spanish gentlemen mourned for him as though he had been of their own blood.

The victors kept their faith. All the Englishmen were honourably treated, and sent home into England after moderate ransom. But the *Revenge*, like Sir Richard, had fought her last fight. The Spaniards patched her up as well as they could, and put a crew of their own on board. But a few days after the fight a great storm arose, and the *Revenge* went down off St. Michael with two hundred Spaniards on board, and fourteen of the galleons went

down with her to give her honourable burial. Several more were lost among the other islands, and of the great plate-fleet itself, "the cause of all this woe," what with this storm, and the English cruisers, among whom the brave little *Pilgrim* figures again, less than one-third ever came safe into Spain. "Thus," wrote Raleigh, "it hath pleased God to fight for us;" and thus did Master Gervase Markham write the English hero's epitaph:

Rest then, dear soul, in thine all-resting
 peace,
 And take my tears for trophies to thy
 tomb,
 Let thy lost blood thy unlust fame increase,
 Make kingly ears thy praises' second
 womb;
 That when all tongues to all reports sur-
 cease,
 Yet shall thy deeds outlive the day of
 doom.
 For even Angels in the Heavens shall
 sing
 Grinvile unconquered died, still con-
 quering.

M. M.

THREE PERSIAN QUATRAINS.

I.

(From *Omar Khayyam*.)*Sic transit gloria mundi.*

Yon fort once proudly towered into the blue;
 Kings at its portals rendered homage due.
 Now from its ruins sounds the dove's lone coo,
 And fondly asks *who* built it, *who, who, who?*

II.

(From Sâdî's *Gulistan*. Book iii., Story 27.)

The wise I liken unto coins of gold,
 Valued in all the earth;
 But fools high-born as token coins I hold,
 Of merely local worth.

III.

(Author not known.)

When you were born, a helpless child,
 You only cried while others smiled.
 So live, that when you come to die,
 You then may smile and others cry.

T. C. LEWIS.

MOZART'S LIBRETTIST.

LORENZO DA PONTE was born at Ceneda in 1749, and has left voluminous memoirs (printed in New York in 1830), garrulous and egotistical, but amusing enough. His only claim to fame, and that but a poor one, is having written the words for Mozart's immortal *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni*.

Driven from his father's house by a young stepmother, Da Ponte entered the seminary, where his intelligence, poetic talents, and personal appearance attracted the notice of the Archbishop, who wished him to become a priest. At twenty-two he was already Professor of Rhetoric and Literature and in great request for composing Latin and Italian verses for all occasions. The jealousy of the older masters made life intolerable to him, and he left Ceneda to seek his fortune at Venice. The descriptions of the intrigues and masquerades on the Piazza San Marco are worthy of Benvenuto Cellini, and the handsome young poet threw himself headlong into every kind of dissipation. A sonnet written in the Venetian dialect against the nobility, which became popular among the gondoliers, and a supper of fried ham in Lent, roused the ire of the Council of Ten and of the Inquisition, and Da Ponte fled for his life.

He arrived, with a Horace, a Dante, and a Petrararch for his worldly possessions, at Goritz, and was hospitably received by a young and pretty German hostess. At supper she waited on him in person, and by the aid of a German and Italian dictionary they made known their mutual admiration. When supper was over the pretty innkeeper called one of her maids to sing a well-known German song which begins, "I love a man from the Italian land," and offered him her heart and her purse, which he refused. After a series of

adventures, during which he supported himself by writing odes to the Empress of Austria and various great people, he found himself at Vienna, where Abbé Casti, known for his facile and licentious writings, was in high favour with Count Rosemberg, Director of the Imperial Opera House. Emperor Joseph seems to have taken a liking to the quick-witted, pleasant-mannered, handsome Da Ponte, who could hold his own against the Abbé, and amused Vienna by his lampoons and squibs. Count Rosemberg in vain tried to induce his imperial master to name Casti Cæsarian poet, or, as we should say, poet-laureate. This post had been vacant since the death of Metastasio, who, Da Ponte says, died of grief because the Emperor, finding the innumerable pensions granted by the late Empress Maria Theresa too heavy a burden for the exchequer, had decreed their abolition. He reserved the right to continue those he considered proper, and among others he confirmed Metastasio's, but the poor old poet only lived to enjoy it for a few days. Maria Theresa must have scattered money broadcast, to judge by Da Ponte's story of the Bishop of Goritz, who was much esteemed by her. The father, mother, brother, sisters, and servants of the Bishop had all received pensions; at last he complained that his father would be obliged to sell two old horses, "faithful beasts that had worked for thirty-three years," because he could not afford to feed useless animals. The Empress immediately bestowed a pension of three hundred florins a year "to the faithful horses of the Bishop's father."

In Vienna, at the house of Baron Vetzlar, Da Ponte met Mozart. "I can never remember without pride and pleasure," he writes, "that Europe,

and indeed the whole world, owe in a great measure to my perseverance and firmness the exquisite compositions of so admirable a genius."

Martini at that time was the idol of Vienna, and his opera, *Il Burbero di Buon Cuore*, with words by Da Ponte, had been most successful. In spite of the cabals of Abbé Casti, Martini asked for another *libretto* which Da Ponte promised to write, at the same time offering to do one for Mozart. The latter suggested *Le Mariage de Figaro* by Beaumarchais.

"This," says our poet, "pleased me; but a great difficulty stood in the way. Only a short while before the Emperor had forbidden the German company to act this comedy, as unfit for decent ears. How was it to be submitted to him as a subject for an opera? Baron Vetzlar generously offered to pay me a handsome sum for the words, and to arrange for the opera to be given in London or in France, if it were refused in Vienna. This I declined, and begged that the words and music should be composed in secret, while we waited for a favourable opportunity to propose it to the directors of the theatre or to the Emperor. This I courageously undertook to manage. Only Martini knew of my design, and out of admiration for Mozart he consented to wait for his *libretto* until I had finished *Figaro*. So I set to work, and as fast as I wrote the words Mozart wrote the music. By great good fortune there was a lack of scores at the Opera. Seizing this opportunity, I went, without saying a word to any one, straight to the Emperor and offered him *Figaro*. 'What!' he exclaimed. 'Do you not know that Mozart, excelling in instrumental music, has never written but one opera, and that was not remarkable?' With humility I replied that but for the clemency of his Majesty I should not have written more than one play in Vienna. 'True,' he said; 'but I have forbidden this very comedy to be acted by the German players.' I answered 'Yes, but having composed a drama for music,

it is no longer a comedy. I have perforce omitted many scenes and shortened others, and I have omitted or shortened everything that could mar the decency and delicacy of an entertainment destined to be honoured by the presence of sovereign majesty. The music, so far as I can judge, is of marvellous beauty!' 'Very well,' was the gracious reply; 'in that case I trust to your taste about the music and to your prudence for the morality. Give the score to the copyist.' I ran at once to Mozart, and had not finished telling him the good news when an imperial messenger arrived, ordering him to go at once to the palace with the score. He obeyed, and the Emperor, whose taste in music, as in all things pertaining to art, was exquisite, expressed the greatest admiration for several pieces. This did not please the Viennese composers, nor did it please Count Rosenberg, who disliked that kind of music; least of all did it please Casti, who dared no longer say that Da Ponte could not write poetry. These two good friends were not able to injure us much, but they did what they could. A certain Bussane, versed in every trade save that of honesty, who had charge of the costumes and scenery, heard there was to be a ballet in *Figaro*. So he hastened to tell Count Rosenberg, and I was sent for. Frowning severely, the Count said: 'So Mr. Poet has inserted a ballet into *Figaro*?' 'Yes, your Excellency.' 'Mr. Poet does not know that the Emperor will not allow ballets at his theatre?' 'No, your Excellency.' 'Very well, Mr. Poet; then I tell you so now.' 'Yes, your Excellency.' 'And what is more, you must strike it out, Mr. Poet.' This *Mr. Poet* was said in a way that meant *Mr. Donkey*. But my *your Excellency* had much the same intonation. 'Have you the *libretto* with you?' 'Yes, your Excellency.' 'This is what one does.' And he tore out two pages of the manuscript and threw them into the fire. 'You see, Mr. Poet, I can do

everything. Go!' Mozart was in despair when I told him what had happened. He wanted to go to Count Rosenberg,—to chastise Bussane,—to appeal to Caesar,—to take back the score. I begged him to wait a few days and leave everything to me. The rehearsal was fixed for that very day, and the Emperor had promised to attend it. He came, and half the Viennese nobility with him. Applause was general during the first act, until the by-play between Almaviva and Susanna during the ballet. But as his Excellency *Do Everything* had torn out these pages, the actors gesticulated while the orchestra remained mute. It was like a scene for marionettes. 'What is this?' said the Emperor to Abbé Casti, who was sitting behind him. 'Your Majesty must ask the poet,' replied the Abbé, with a malicious smile. So I was called, and instead of speaking, handed my manuscript, into which I had again inserted the ballet, to the Emperor. He looked at it, and inquired why the dance was not performed. By my continued silence the Emperor understood that something was wrong, and turned to the Count for an explanation. Rosenberg stammered out a lame excuse that there were no ballet-dancers at the opera-house. 'I suppose the other theatres can furnish them. Let Da Ponte have as many as he wants,' ordered the Sovereign. In half an hour twenty-four dancers were ready, and the rejected scene was given at the end of the second act amid general applause."

Some time after Da Ponte wrote words for three operas simultaneously. The Emperor bet one hundred sequins that he would not be able to do it, and with characteristic bombast he replied; "At night I shall write for Mozart, and imagine I am reading the *Inferno* of Dante; for Martini I shall reserve my mornings and think I am studying Petrarch; the evenings shall be dedicated to Salieri, when Tasso will be my prototype." Da Ponte gives a long-winded description of how sadly he was missed by the wits and fine ladies

of Vienna while he worked for twelve hours a day with a bottle of Tokay on his right hand, a large inkstand in front, and a box of Seville snuff to his left. A pretty waiting-maid brought him sweet biscuits and coffee whenever he rang, and in sixty-three days the *libretti* were finished. Martini's *L'Arbore di Diani* was represented first, and well received. *Don Giovanni* was ordered to be given at Prague for the arrival of the Princess of Tuscany, and Da Ponte went there to put it on the stage; but before it was ready he was recalled to Vienna because Salieri's opera *Assur* had been chosen for the gala night in honour of the marriage of the Archduke Francis.

From Prague Da Ponte received glowing accounts of the success of *Don Giovanni*. "Long live Da Ponte! Long live Mozart! All managers and all lovers of music must bless them. So long as they live there will be no want of operas,"—wrote a friend who evidently knew our poet's little weakness. The Emperor ordered that the opera should be given in Vienna. "How can I write it?" says Da Ponte. "*Don Giovanni* was a failure! All, save Mozart, thought something was wanting. We added a little,—we changed some songs,—and it was repeated. Again it failed! Only the Emperor said: 'The opera is divine; perhaps even better than *Figaro*; but it is not food suited to the teeth of my Viennese.' When I told this to Mozart, he answered with a quiet smile,—'Let us give them time to chew it.' He was right. I induced the Director to give *Don Giovanni* several times with ever-increasing success; and at length the Viennese began to taste its beauty and understand that it is one of the finest works ever produced for the stage."

Soon after the Emperor Joseph died, Da Ponte fell into disgrace with his successor Leopold, and left Vienna for Trieste. There he married an English girl, and after a wandering life in France, Saxony, and Holland, went to London, where he became stage-man-

ager and poet for a certain William Taylor, *impresario* of the Italian Opera. Manager, actors, and poet quarrelled and intrigued perpetually, and the latter, being induced to back bills for Mr. Taylor, was imprisoned and ruined. He then set up a book-shop in London, -- "in order," as he says, "to diffuse in that most noble city the treasures of our Italian literature. On the 1st of March, 1801, I had nine hundred volumes of admirable books bought for little at sales and from booksellers who did not know their value. I soon made not less than four hundred guineas, and bought more old editions and ordered new books from Italy which aided me to illumine the minds of the most educated and erudite English. Among these were the celebrated Roscoe and Walker, to whom Italian literature owes so much."

Poor Lorenzo Da Ponte had no sooner made a little money than Taylor's creditors came down upon him with other bills, and he was again ruined. He consoled himself with highdown sentiment, and embarked for America, where the parents of his wife were living. There, after trying many trades in various cities, he at last settled down in New York and taught Italian to young ladies. Fifty pages of the Memoirs are filled with letters of his pupils, and his own corrections and remarks upon their intelligence and wit. To his best scholars he gave the names of flowers and wrote verses in their honour; but he complains that Hymen robbed his garden of its finest ornaments, and once more he fell back on the book-trade, opening a small library. This, he remarks, was fortunately placed next door to a shop where sweets and cakes were sold, so that at least he had the satisfaction of seeing fine equipages standing in the street outside his door.

His vanity, which was however mixed with very real patriotism, received great satisfaction by the arrival in New York of Garcia and his incomparable daughter Malibran with an

Italian company. Da Ponte says they opened the eyes of the Americans to the beauties of Italian music by giving Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia*, and he never rested until he had persuaded Garcia to put *Don Giovanni* on the stage. It was very successful; words, music, and singers, particularly the brilliant, pretty, and amiable Zerlina, were admired and praised, and the city was divided in two camps, one for Rossini, the other for Mozart, greatly to the advantage of the manager. Da Ponte was allowed to sell an English translation of his *libretto* in the theatre for the use of the public who did not know Italian. "I sold a prodigious number," he says with his usual exaggeration. "Also by good luck I put some copies in a lottery-ticket shop, and the man in a few hours sent to ask me for more, giving me sixteen dollars for those he had sold. As I took them my eyes fell on a notice,—*To-morrow, the lottery will be drawn, sixteen dollars a ticket.* My good star led me to leave the money with him in exchange for a ticket, and next morning I was awoken by the shopman who announced that I had won five hundred dollars! Blessing Mozart, *Don Giovanni*, and the lottery, I at once wrote to Italy for more books to increase my stock, out of which I chose a selection to present to the University where I taught Italian literature to a few members."

On his seventy-ninth birthday Lorenzo Da Ponte made a magniloquent speech to his pupils which fills twenty-two closely printed pages. "Every one applauded," he records, but pathetically adds, "my triumph ended in fine words. Not a subscription to my proposed course of lectures! Not a single new pupil!"

The year of Da Ponte's death is apparently unknown. He printed the last volume of his Memoirs when he was ninety-seven, ending with a quotation from Petrarch, "I know my faults, and I deplore them."

JANET ROSS.

A CURIOUS DISCOVERY.

PROFESSOR FLEG's methods with the golf-club were remarkable. He was in every way a remarkable man, and in every department of his life a methodical man. If he ever erred it was, as in the present instance, by regarding all things as capable of being brought into the domain of exact science; for it was in this attitude that he approached the game of golf, which is scarcely susceptible of such treatment.

The occasion has now become historical on which he sought the counsel of the wizard—the great medicine man—of golf, in the following terms:—"I like, my dear sir, to do everything methodically. All through my life I have approached things in that way, and I have not yet been completely beaten, if I may say so, by anything. Now I am taking up the game of golf club by club—each club in turn. Hitherto I have devoted my attention solely to the driver. I now propose to make myself thorough master of the iron. Would you therefore have the kindness to show me, my dear sir, exactly in what manner you hold your hands while playing an iron stroke?"

Such are the methods of a conquering intellect; but the club-by-club system did not exhaust the peculiarities of Professor Fleg's fashion of mastering the game of golf. For he put himself into what he conceived to be the position indicated by the best authorities and illustrated by diagrams in many highly scientific treatises on the game, and had in attendance the Peblecombe carpenter who then and there constructed around the Professor's feet a wooden framework. This framework the Professor's caddie (a long-suffering and much-to-be-pitied person) carried round with the

Professor whenever that great man engaged in the game of golf, and planted it upon the *teeing* ground, so that if, as sometimes occurred, the Professor *topped* the ball or otherwise misconducted himself with regard to it, he could at least be sure of erring on the most approved methods.

Now Colonel Burscough was not a man of science, and greatly preferred hitting the ball in a style which the most charitable critic could not call orthodox to missing it in the correct fashion beloved by Mr. Fleg. "Brute force, my dear sir,—no science," was Mr. Fleg's whispered soliloquy (for even in soliloquy his speech was studiously courteous) whenever the Colonel in his attitude of Philistine drove beyond the limits of the Professor's highly cultured power. And this frequently happened, for the Colonel's physique was better adapted than that of Mr. Fleg to the complex purposes of the noble game. Nevertheless Mr. Fleg's scientific perseverance was rewarded by a steady though gradual improvement such as did not attend Colonel Burscough's more rough and ready methods. Therefore in the many matches that they had played together, though Colonel Burscough had always hitherto had the better of it, yet his advantage grew less with every match, until there were critics to prophesy (under their breath, be it said, and far, very far, behind the Colonel's back) that the day would eventually come when science would make its power felt and the Man of Learning come in a hole ahead of the Man of War.

In prospect of that day all Peblecombe held its breath in an awful silence, for it was shrewdly thought that on such a day as that it would be evil for any who came within reach

of the Colonel's wrath. For though the Colonel's methods with the golf club differed absolutely from those of Mr. Fleg, they were not one whit less remarkable. The game of golf is one which, it is well known, demands peculiar equanimity of temper and the long-suffering patience which is so eminently characteristic of the Scot. Now excellent man as Colonel Burscough was, equanimity of temper was not one of his natural gifts. A game of golf with the Colonel was therefore a mixed form of pleasure—a fearful joy. A measure of amusement was assured, but it had need to be amusement carefully disguised, for golf clubs are formidable weapons in the hands of an angry man. When things were going well all was sweetness and light; but golf links are treacherous places with dire pitfalls, named bunkers, into which the ball sidles like an ant into the lair of the ant-lion. In the first bunker Colonel Burscough was as good as gold; in the second he began to talk in Hindostani; and in the third he sometimes grew a little angry. Then his caddie, who knew him well, would hand the Colonel his niblick, and place in a convenient corner of the bunker an old umbrella, which he always carried with him to perform the office of a scapegoat. For if the Colonel failed to extricate his ball from the bunker on the first attempt his mood grew dangerous. The niblick strokes fell faster until the ball flew from the bunker, and the Colonel being now very angry indeed would look around him for some object upon which his wrath could spend itself. Whereon he would see the umbrella, to which, as having "caught his eye," he would at once attribute his calamities, and summarily execute it at the edge of the niblick. The caddie, having kept himself in the background until the extreme fury of the Colonel's wrath had spent itself, would come up with discreet humility to receive the tail end only of the storm, and to retrieve the umbrella which had been the vicarious sufferer in his stead.

The occasions on which the Colonel had sworn once and for ever to abandon the game of golf are almost beyond counting. He would wave his hand with tragic pathos towards the links of Pebblecombe and declare with sad solemnity—"This place has seen me for the last time;" and in this black mood he would remain till dinner. With the soup, however, life began to wear a brighter aspect, with the joint he began to repent him of his determination, and with the dessert he was ready to play any man in the world, on any terms that were at all reasonable, on the very next day.

But besides these numerous occasions on which he had set no outward and visible seal to his immutable resolve, there were other greater ones on which he had confirmed himself therein by a solemn burning of his ships—his entire set of golf clubs. Twice he had built a small bonfire on the edge of the links and then and there made a solemn holocaust of his clubs, his balls, his red coat and all his golfing paraphernalia. Many times also he had broken all his clubs over his knee, that he might never be tempted again to play the game which cost him so much mental anguish; but always, on the morrow morning he had appeared at the club-maker's with an order for a new set.

So that now these two methods of treatment were familiar to Pebblecombe—the Ordeal by Dichotomy, (or division in two) as Mr. Fleg humorously named the club-breaking plan, and the Ordeal by Fire, which was the Professorial name for the holocaust—for it was the Colonel's constant contention that his clubs were possessed by some malign witchcraft so that they would not hit the ball. There remained yet another in the Colonel's repertory—namely, the Ordeal by Water,—and this was put into execution on the day on which the Colonel was first beaten in a match with Mr. Fleg. For the day which all Pebblecombe expected in fear and trembling came at last. The methods

of science proved triumphant, and Mr. Fleg, with a proud flush on his brow, and not without a tremor at his heart, walked into the Golf Club *one up* against the Colonel at the eighteenth hole, having added insult to injury by laying an iniquitous *stymie* at the very end when the Colonel was lying dead at the hole and certain of a half.

There is no measure in the good gifts of Providence. To many it would have seemed that the blessedness of having at length attained the mastery over one who had so often beaten him would be enough to fill the cup of happiness for any ordinary professor of anatomy to the brim. But Mr. Fleg was no ordinary professor, and he was dealt with in no ordinary way. About a twelvemonth after this first and epoch-making victory, he began to make some very singular and interesting discoveries.

Now, there is on the beach at Pebblecombe a stretch of bluish grey mud, of no very great extent. It is very far out upon the sand—so far that only at the lowest tides is it uncovered. It happened that on a Sunday Mr. Fleg was once walking in a pensive, Sabbatical mood along the sands by the sea. The tide was unusually far out, and this mud was uncovered. Mr. Fleg prodded the mud thoughtfully with his stick, and suddenly began to consider it with greater interest. It contained woody fibres in a fair state of preservation—the fibre in many instances of quite large tree trunks.

Now there are people to whom this fibre would have said nothing, unless possibly *decayed cabbage*, or something unpleasantly suggestive of that kind. But it was crammed full of meaning to such a mind as Mr. Fleg's. It said a *submerged forest*—and a submerged forest included remains of the denizens of that forest, of who could say what interest and antiquity! For a moment Mr. Fleg's imagination peopled its once mighty shade with quite impossible denizens—*pterodactyls*,

ichthyosaurs, *megatheriums*. Then his archaeological sense smiled at the anachronisms into which his scientific fervour had launched him, and he corrected himself with softly-spoken soliloquy—"Cave-bear, my dear sir, cave-man, at the earliest; more probably old British ox and Irish elk; almost certainly modern fauna."

Then his anatomical imagination saw himself constructing out of a *humerus* or *tibia* mighty ruminants of primeval days. Mr. Fleg went home that Sabbath evening in a state which in any other man the vulgar might have ascribed to the effects of alcohol. To say he was in a fever of wild excitement is to give not the faintest suggestion of his mental condition. To say that he was covered from head to foot in blue mud is to express but feebly his outward aspect; for never had Mr. Fleg so bitter reason to bewail his short-sightedness, which, fortified with double spectacles as he was, compelled him to go upon his hands and knees, grovelling almost like a serpent, in order to make a close enough examination to reveal the treasures of which he was in search.

Suffice it to say that he returned in a state of general disorder which was a pain to the faithful whom he met on their way to evening church, but with a scientific joy without bounds in his heart, and a small piece of the decayed horn of a deer in his pocket. Nor would he ever have ceased from his search until the shades of night had come upon him, had not the jealous sea come lapping up to him and driven him back step by step over the mud until its nearest limit was swallowed by the envious waves. Then Mr. Fleg went slowly home with the one treasure-trove in his pocket, and elsewhere, impartially upon him, the blue mud.

Now after this auspicious beginning Mr. Fleg bought a nautical calendar which gave information of the behaviour of the tides; and whenever the sea was sufficiently far out to discover even a portion,—and for a few minutes only,—of the precious blue mud, he

would neglect the royal and ancient game of golf itself to go down with a coadjutor, in whom he had inspired a small share of his own enthusiasm, and dig and delve in this dirty clay.

And to tell truth he made several interesting discoveries in the shape of bits of bone and horn and flint arrow-heads and a portion of a human skull. Then he would sit hours into the night poring over his bits of bone, examining them through a microscope, comparing them with the descriptions and pictures in certain very large and heavy books, containing fearful representations of huge skeletons of animals such as no living man has been so unfortunate as to meet. Then on a vast sheet of paper he would begin, with pencil and scale and compasses, to map out a huge skeleton of his own devising—leaving only a little gap, generally somewhere down upon the shin-bone, into which, when all the rest was finished, he would fit the little bit of brown bone which was the basis of the whole mighty superstructure, and would say proudly, "Such, my dear sir, was the creature who roamed in the primeval forest of which we see here to-day the few submerged and wonderfully preserved remains."

Sometimes it would be only a tooth that would supply him with the data for the construction of a whole mighty skeleton—so great, so inconceivable to lesser minds, are the achievements of science and the knowledge of men so richly endowed as Professor Fleg.

But even as it was in the days of old when that hero of *Henry's First Latin Book*, Balbus, feasted the town at twenty sesterces a head and there were still found some, as historians tell us, who laughed—so too now, in in Pebblecombe, there were found persons so unappreciative of the great discoveries of science as to scoff while Mr. Fleg drew his majestic skeletons.

Chief, perchance, among the scoffers was Colonel Burscough, as kind-hearted a volcanic-tempered man as ever lived, yet a British Philistine to the very backbone of him.

The Colonel would stand before the fire with his hands behind his back in Professor Fleg's study, examining with head thrown back the Professor's latest masterpiece in constructive anatomy. So he would stand for awhile in silence—then take the cheroot from his lips to say with all the air of eulogy—"Jammed extraordinary imagination you must have, Fleg—eh?"

"Imagination! my dear sir," Mr. Fleg would reply, permitting the slightest note expressive of the shock which the word bore with it to modify the habitual courtesy of his address. "Imagination! Pardon me, my dear sir, if I venture, with all deference, to take exception to the term you are good enough to employ with reference to that drawing. I assure you there is no imagination used or needed in the construction of such a skeleton on such convincing evidence as the splendid molar which you see restored to its appropriate jaw. It is, my dear sir, as capable of scientific demonstration as any one of Euclid's theorems. Let me refer you—" Here the Professor began turning over the leaves of one of his ponderous volumes, with a running fire of extracts and commentary, while Colonel Burscough took a seat in the armchair and began wondering how he had lost his last golf match.

When Professor Fleg had triumphantly vindicated himself, the Colonel would rise from the chair, examine the molar as if he were comparing it with the essence of all the scientific reading to which he had not listened, and say, "Yes, Fleg—you are right, of course. Jammed like an old sheep's tooth though, after all—eh?"

Mr. Fleg courteously admitted that there was some superficial resemblance, and began to talk to the Colonel—as to one professionally interested in small artillery—about the flint arrow-heads.

The more important of his discoveries—if one may speak so of a matter in which every discovery was of great import—Mr. Fleg communicated from time to time to a

certain learned journal which no one in Peblecombe, except himself, was able to read with any intelligent appreciation. Hitherto, however, Mr. Fleg had been fortunate enough to make no discovery which ran counter to the deductions of other scientists. With the flint arrow-heads he found the skull of the cave-man, the bones of the cave-bear, the horns of the great Irish elk, and the remains of other creatures, all of whom, as is well known, lived together in love and unity.

Then, unheralded by any miraculous premonition or unusual circumstance, the sun dawned—quite in its ordinary manner—upon a day which was to be credited with a discovery at once epoch-making and epoch-breaking—a discovery perhaps the most portentous of any that had been known since men began to read the world's history that is written in its stones and clay. Among the mass of decaying vegetable fibre and blue mud—of a consistency somewhat thicker than chewed tobacco—among the relics of the cave-man, the cave-bear, and the elk, Mr. Fleg came upon something that beyond question was a lump of iron!

Possibly every reader may not at once appreciate the tremendous, the appalling significance of this discovery. But remember the circumstances. Remember that this lump of metal, more than a pound in weight, was found among the flint arrow-heads, among the remains of creatures the history of whose life was part of the story of the world when it was very young—when, in fact, it was in its stone age. So at least it had ever been supposed. Science had given its united voice in favour of the opinion that the cave-man and these animals who were found to be of his time, had existed in the very infancy of the age of stone—that his weapons were at best of flint, and those not of a high finish. Science had asked sympathy for the cave-man in his apparently unequal fight with the great denizens of the forest

in which he lived. But now—what did this discovery say? No less a thing than this—that Science had been mistaken in the matter from first to last—that all previous theories must be cast to the wind (for one negative condemns an hypothesis, no matter by how many affirmatives it be supported)—that the comparatively sophisticated age of iron must be put back perhaps thousands of years in the world's story—must be put away back into the fancied simplicity of the age of stone. With this iron weapon (for doubtless it was in the manufacture of weapons of offence, that Tubal Cain, in the early struggle for existence, first exercised his art)—with this fairly adequate iron weapon the cave-man, who had so long and so nefariously usurped our sympathy, might have felled to the earth perhaps no less mighty a quarry than the Great Irish Elk itself!

In such manner did Mr. Fleg expound his theme to his admiring listeners while he held in a hand that trembled with infinitely more sense of the preciousness of its burden than if it had borne a nugget of like size, the miraculous iron weapon that he had delved from the blue mud. True, the exact nature and outline of the weapon were as yet somewhat shrouded in mystery, and in what Mr. Fleg referred to as “ferric oxide, my dear sir, or rust,” but it was abundantly evident from its mass and rough shape, that it had been intended for a hitting weapon of some kind.

Next day, by special messenger, Mr. Fleg sent this wonderful relic to a shop in London with which he had had frequent dealings, and where he could trust the care and knowledge of the workmen, with orders that the ferric oxide should be removed with such skill and science as these specialists had at their command. Meanwhile he wrote off to all the scientific and leading papers in the country, giving an account of the discovery, with photographs of the weapon in its rough state (encrusted with mud)

and minute descriptions of the nature of the clay and other relics in whose company it had been found.

A perfect storm of correspondence followed both in the public prints and in the shape of private communications to the Professor—so that he found himself obliged to temporarily engage a special clerk, to answer at his dictation the mass of his correspondents.

Meanwhile all Pebblecombe, and Mr. Fleg particularly, held its breath in expectation of the return, cleansed of its swathing of "ferric oxide, my dear sir, or rust," of the weapon which had dealt such a blow to all the previous hypotheses of Science.

Mr. Fleg was playing golf when he received a telegram informing him that the relic, restored so far as might be to its first form, was that day being despatched again by special messenger from London—to speak exactly, Mr. Fleg was in a bunker. In an instant all the familiar horrors of that situation were dissipated. He gave up the hole to Colonel Burscough, with whom he was playing, and felt scarcely a pang of regret. He neglected his methodical grasp of the driver, he forgot about the wooden foot-frame-work, which lay idle in his caddie's hand, while Colonel Burscough with immense joy won from him hole after hole. At the end of the round he paid to the Colonel their statutory wager of half-a-crown without his usual harmless necessary joke, "Look upon it, my dear sir, I would beg you, in the light simply of a loan," and hurried the Colonel greatly in his preparations for leaving the Golf Club and walking back to Pebblecombe.

On the walk Mr. Fleg was silent and abstracted. At the door of his house he was trembling with an overpowering nervousness. "My friend," he said to the Colonel, as the latter was about to leave him (it was the preface to some very momentous statement when Mr. Fleg abandoned his usual style of address, as "my dear sir," for the yet more impressive cordi-

ality of "my friend"), "My friend, I would beg of you a favour. I would beg of you to come in with me and be present with me on this which is immensely the greatest moment of my life. There will be awaiting me, as I conceive, within this little villa, a treasure which shall alter the reading of nearly all the history of the world's creation—an iron weapon coeval with the cave-dweller. Will you be with me, my friend, at this great moment of my life, when I shall see my treasure trove in something approaching its original shape?"

"Why, yes, of course, Fleg; jammed interesting, you know. Great privilege I mean to say. Assure you I feel it so."

The *savant* grasped his friend's hand with grateful pressure, and the two entered the house together. The servant told Mr. Fleg that a young man from London had delivered a parcel, with careful instructions for its safety and welfare. Mr. Fleg led the way into his study, and there beneath the approving figures of the giant skeletons rested, in an ordinary deal box, on an ordinary mahogany table, the iron weapon of the cave-man. Then Mr. Fleg rang the bell for hammer and chisel. His nervousness was something pitiable to see. He could not sit still while the tools were brought. His hand trembled so that he could not use them to any effect when they came.

"Here, let me!"

Colonel Burscough took them from him and began to work and hammer on the box in angry vigour. Mr. Fleg seated himself in an armchair at the other end of the room, and burying his face in his hands rocked himself back and forward in the agony of his suspense. He could not bear to look.

There was a sound of crashing wood and rending metal. Then there was comparative silence while the Colonel rummaged in the shavings and paper with which the box was stuffed. Mr. Fleg no longer groaned. His suspense

had become too intense for any expression, and he remained motionless, without a sound awaiting Colonel Burscough's word that the relic was revealed.

The waiting seemed very long. Mr. Fleg grasped an arm of his chair with either hand, and in a semi-catalepsy of the muscles fastened his eyes rigidly upon Colonel Burscough's face to read the feelings evoked by the first sight of the wondrous relic.

For the Colonel's expression had undergone a singular change.

The silence grew deeper and more painful, and to Mr. Fleg it began to seem that Colonel Burscough, the room, the relic, everything, were far, far away. He was mocked by a sense of dream-like unreality.

And the change on Colonel Burscough's face responded likewise to a vision of things far away—far distant both in time and place. He felt himself transported back to a certain day a twelvemonth since, and to a painful scene of his humiliation upon the Pebblecombe links—the day on which he had first suffered defeat at the learned hands of Mr. Fleg. The whole scene was before him. The day was a particularly warm and sunny one. The bees hummed over the wild flowers, the sand-flies buzzed in the bunkers. Warmth and flies are fearful aggravations to the wrath of an angry man. And Colonel Burscough, on this particularly beautiful summer's day, saw himself a very angry man indeed—angry so much beyond his wont that his anger found no expression; it was at silent white heat. He took his clubs from his caddie with an unusual gentleness that had meaning. He handled them with the caressant ferocity of a cat playing with a mouse. He strode over the great ridge of pebbles which keeps back the sea at Pebblecombe and down on to the sands. It was low tide. No one was in the immediate neighbourhood; but he well knew that in ambush on the top of the pebble ridge, peering over, were all the members there present of the Royal Pebble-

combe Golf Club and all the club-makers, caddies, ground-men, and all who were in any capacity whatsoever associated with the royal and ancient game in the vicinity. And each looked over with all his two eyes, as carefully as though he had been stalking a tiger, and gazed at the Colonel who had seated himself on the foot of the ridge.

The Colonel saw himself take off his boots. And though none of the watchers might know what this betokened, they held a collective silence and looked with all their eyes.

The Colonel took off his clothes—that is to say very nearly all—retaining only such as a perfunctory regard for decency forbade him to part with. Then he walked out, carrying his clubs over the sand.

And all the while he was conscious of the watchers who watched him in silence as he walked, walking with the deliberate purpose of a man whose mind is firmly fixed. He did not pause an instant when he reached the sea. He went straight in, and presently the breakers were dashing now over his hips, now over his shoulders. If he went deeper he would have to swim. Once he stumbled badly, but contrived to recover himself; then he drew himself to his full height in the water and raised his right hand high out of it. And in his right hand was a golf club. He whirled this golf club once round his head, as a cowboy twirls his lasso—then launched it out, far as ever he could throw it, into the sea.

Then he reached down for another, under his left arm—even as an archer reaches for the arrows in his quiver—and hurled that one after the first.

Again and yet again, and again he did this—until the whole set of nine clubs had been hurled beyond the furthest breaker. Then he turned and strode back out of the surf, the blackness of his mood a trifle tempered by the completeness of the sacrifice. And thus was consummated the third and last of the great ordeals—the Ordeal by Water.

Such was the vision that passed before the Colonel's dreamy eyes while he gazed upon Mr. Fleg's wondrous relic, and while Mr. Fleg grasped convulsively the two arms of his chair.

At length to Mr. Fleg's expectancy the very silence grew full of menacing voices. He could endure no longer.

"Well?" he gasped.

Then Colonel Burscough roused himself from his abstraction and he too said "Well!"—but without the interrogation.

Then he paused again; but after a moment he resumed, speaking very solemnly—"Fleg, do you remember that day on which you first beat me in a golf match?"

Did he remember it? Would he ever forget it? Mr. Fleg thought the Colonel was about to draw some fruitful comparison between that great red-letter day in the professorial life and this. "Indeed, my friend, I remember it well," Mr. Fleg gasped from the chair.

"And on that day, Fleg, I waded far out into the sea. I threw my golf clubs

from me—for ever, as I thought—into the Atlantic."

"I know, I know, my friend," said Mr. Fleg moved, in this the day of his brightest triumph, to deepest sympathy for that the blackest day of defeat for his friend.

"I slipped," the Colonel continued. "For a moment I thought I was drowned——"

"I remember," Mr. Fleg murmured, with yet warmer sympathy.

"But I recovered myself by sticking one of my clubs down through the sea upon the treacherous mud on which I slipped. I recovered myself, but the club broke short off at the head."

"Ah!" said Mr. Fleg vaguely.

"It was the niblick, Fleg—and I had thought never to see that niblick-head again. But here—steel yourself, Fleg, I fear this may be a blow to you—it was no cave-man's weapon, this, Fleg; only a bunker-man's—this iron weapon of your Stone Age is that very niblick. Here is the inscription, legible on it still — *James Wilson, Maker, St. Andrews.*"

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

COWPER'S LETTERS.

It is often said that the delightful art of letter-writing is dead. No doubt circumstances are not so favourable to it as they once were, as they were, for instance, in the last century, the golden age of the letter-writer. It never does to have too much of a good thing, and so Rowland Hill, and Penny Posts, and hourly deliveries, have very nearly killed the old-fashioned letter which rambled and gossiped and wandered at will up and down all sorts of subjects, overflowing into every corner of the paper except just the little space required for the address on one side and the seal on the other. When you paid fourpence, or sixpence, or more for a letter, or had had the trouble of asking a Parliamentary acquaintance for a frank, you naturally took your money's worth. And then in the last century everybody seems to have had plenty of time; nowadays we are all in a hurry from morning to night. And hurry, which ruins nearly everything from bootlaces to epic poems, is no friend to letters, though not so fatal to them as to more ambitious productions. Byron may dash down on his paper, in his headlong, helter-skelter sort of way, the last witticisms and personalities that happen to be simmering in his excited brain, and the effect is very characteristic and very telling. But the best letters cannot be written so. Hurry and exuberance of this kind weary in the end, and leave an uncomfortable sensation of disorder and unrest in the mind; the highest productions of every kind, in art, or music, or literature, however intense may be the immediate delight they give, leave the mind to settle in the end into a sort of quiet enjoyment. The pleasure over, we rest in calm satisfaction. And this must be the

No. 385.—VOL. LXV.

law in letter-writing, as in everything else, if letters are to be read. They can only rank as literature by submitting to conditions to which literature submits. And there will not only be the general conditions attached to all composition to be taken into account, but special conditions attached to this particular form of composition. It is at first sight a little doubtful what the characteristics of a good letter are. Some people think it merely a matter of conversation through the post; and there is certainly a good deal to be said for this theory; the elaborately composed letter is the worst possible letter. Ease and naturalness, lightness of touch, the sense for the little things which are the staple of conversation and correspondence as well as of life, the ever-present consciousness that one is simply one's self and not an author or an editor, are of all qualities the most essential in a letter. A good letter is like a good present—a link between two personalities, having something of each in it. It is emphatically from one man, or woman, to another, in contrast, for instance, to a newspaper, which is from nobody or anybody to anybody or nobody. But if this were all, Byron would be incontestably the best of our letter-writers. Nothing could possibly be more personal, and characteristic and spontaneous, than his letters: his likes and dislikes, his pleasures and disappointments, his passing fancies, schemes, whims, are poured out in them with a force and freshness which are unrivalled and inimitable. It is just as if he were talking, and talking with the freedom and openness of a man at a friendly supper-party; and of course his evident frankness doubles the interest and importance of it all. But after

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all writing is not talking, and an exuberance which might perhaps be delightful, when broken by other voices and lighted up by all the play of eye and feature, becomes after a time intolerable in a volume of letters. It is the same thing, I suppose, as one sees in portraits, where a too energetic or spirited attitude nearly always produces failure. Whatever makes a claim to permanence must have at least a suggestion of repose about it.

English literature is fairly rich in good letters, and in the very first rank of the best come the letters of the recluse, who might naturally be supposed to have nothing to write about, the quiet, retiring, half-Methodist poet, William Cowper. They are written in the most beautifully easy English, and he steers his way with unflinching instinct between the opposite dangers of pompousness and vulgarity, which are the Scylla and Charybdis of the letter-writer. They are not set compositions, but he never forgets that he is writing, not talking; they contain long discussions, yet he does not often forget that he is writing a letter and not a book. The most striking proof of his wonderful gifts in this direction is the story of his life. He was not a leading figure in the world of fashion, like Horace Walpole and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; he was not even a scholar or a man of letters with intellectual friends, like Gray and Carlyle; still less had he been behind the great political curtain like Chesterfield, or travelled everywhere and been the talk of all the world like Byron. Nearly all his letters are written upon the most ordinary subjects to the most ordinary people, and written either from Olney, which was certainly a very dull place, or from Weston Underwood, which cannot have been a very lively one. And yet I doubt much if a volume so good and readable as Mr. Benham's *Selected Letters of Cowper* in the Golden Treasury Series could be made out of those of any one else. Not even Gray, I fancy, in spite

of the fascination of his character and the delicate charm of his humour, in spite of the combination of real learning with those high gifts of imagination and sensibility which make him a unique figure in the last century, has left so many letters likely to retain a permanent interest as Cowper. Gray's letters are delightful as is everything of his, but simply as letters they do not seem to me so perfect as Cowper's. Nor is the reason perhaps very hard to find. Other things being equal, of two writers or painters the one who has chosen the better subject will clearly succeed best. Now Cowper of all writers of letters has the best subject, because he has no subject at all. And so he is led into quiet gossiping self-revelation, little humorous touches about himself and his correspondents, the nothings that filled up their lives as they fill up ours, their likes and dislikes, their sayings and doings, their comings and goings. Human nature is always and everywhere of the same stuff, and the glimpses these letters give us of kind old Mrs. Unwin, and "my dearest Coz," Lady Hesketh, and "Mrs. Frog," and "Johnny" Johnson, and fullest and best of all, of "your humble me, W. C.," can never lose their interest, because the human nature they show us is the same as we see around us every day, and as our sons and grandsons will see too when we have vanished in our turn as completely as Cowper and his friends. Not that of course mere accuracy is enough in drawing human nature,—that may be found—is found often enough—in the dulllest and most insipid novels; it is when the eye to see is found in company with the power of feeling life's joys and sorrows, and with the gift for telling the tale, that the books are written which never grow out of date. Few men have had these gifts more fully than Cowper, and it is a pity that he never wrote a novel. If he had done so, we might have the two sides of English middle-class life in the country and the country towns

drawn in one picture; the simple goodness of the immortal Vicar side by side with the delightful vanity and self-importance of Mrs. Bennett and Mrs. Allen. Perhaps, too, the creator of Sir Roger de Coverley might have found a successor; for Cowper recalls Addison on more than one point, in the quiet reserve which gives such charm to his humour, and in the delicacy of his touch as well as in the ease and purity of his English. Meanwhile the letters are the only substitute we have for the unwritten novel, and there could not be a better. It would not be easy to find a more charming exhibition of the novelist's gift of making us at once at home in the world to which he wishes to introduce us, than this little letter of Cowper's to his cousin, Lady Hesketh, before her first visit to him at Olney. We have only to read his few sentences, and we can hardly fail to carry away with us a fairly clear idea of what manner of man he was, a fairly true picture of him and his life and ways and surroundings, and, what is much more, a disposition to like him and sympathise with him, and a wish to know more of him. The novelist who can accomplish his introductory duties as well as a happy man; and certainly I cannot find anything which will serve better as an introduction both to Cowper and to his letters. Here it is.

And now, my dear, let me tell you once more that your kindness in promising us a visit has charmed us both. I shall see you again. I shall hear your voice. We shall take walks together. I will show you my prospects, the hovel, the alcove, the Ouse and its banks, everything that I have described. Talk not of an inn! Mention it not for your life! We have never had so many visitors but we could easily accommodate them all; though we have received Unwin, and his wife, and his sister, and his son, all at once. My dear, I will not let you come till the end of May, or beginning of June, because before that time my greenhouse will not be ready to receive us, and it is the only pleasant room belonging to us. When the plants go out, we go in. I line it with

mats, and spread the floor with mats; and there you shall sit with a bed of mignonette at your side, and a hedge of honeysuckles, roses, and jasmine; and I will make you a bouquet of myrtle every day. Sooner than the time I mention the country will not be in complete beauty; and I will tell you what you shall find at your first entrance. Imprimis, as soon as you have entered the vestibule, if you cast a look on either side of you, you shall see on the right hand a box of my making. It is the box in which have been lodged all my hares, and in which lodges Puss¹ at present. But he, poor fellow, is worn out with age and promises to die before you can see him. On the right hand stands a cupboard, the work of the same author; it was once a dove-cage, but I transformed it. Opposite to you stands a table, which I also made. But a merciless servant, having scrubbed it till it became paralytic, it serves no purpose now but of ornament; and all my clean shoes stand under it. On the left hand, at the farther end of this superb vestibule, you will find the door of the parlour, into which I will conduct you, and where I will introduce you to Mrs. Unwin, unless we should meet her before, and where we will be as happy as the day is long. Order yourself, my cousin, to the 'Swan' at Newport and there you shall find me ready to conduct you to Olney. My dear, I have told Homer what you say about casks and urns, and have asked him whether he is sure that it is a cask in which Jupiter keeps his wine. He swears that it is a cask, and that it will never be anything better than a cask to eternity. So if the god is content with it, we must even wonder at his taste, and be so too.—Adieu! my dearest, dearest cousin,—W. C.

Did ever poet's cousin have prettier welcome? There is nothing clever in the letter, nothing much to catch the eye or explain the fascination, and yet every time we read it we like it the better. Where does the charm lie? Perhaps in the choice and delicate English Cowper always employs; perhaps in the simple prettiness of the picture, or, it may be, in the perfect, if unconscious, firmness and delicacy with which it is executed; more likely still, perhaps, in the attraction exercised upon us by Cowper's own overflowing good nature which seems to

¹ Cowper's tame hare.

have an affectionate word not only for his cousin and his haire, but for everything about him down to the mignonette and the roses and the honeysuckle, and even the poor paralytic table.

This letter belongs to the happiest period of his life, the time one naturally goes to when one wishes to see him most himself. If we are to date him by a *floruit* after the fashion of the Greek and Latin poets, 1786, the year in which this letter was written, would be almost exactly his central year. But his letters are not confined to that happy time, and we can, if we like, almost follow him all through his life with their help. I have given a frontispiece, as it were, from his years of health and fame and quiet happiness; but we had better now go back to the beginning, and take things orderly as they come.

His life is broken into very simple divisions. He was born at Berkhamstead Rectory in 1731, went to school at Westminster, and entered at the Middle Temple in 1748. London was his home till 1763, when he first went out of his mind. He seems to have lived a pleasant enough life while in London, not much troubled with the law, but spending his time in a careless sort of fashion with young literary men like himself, among whom were Lloyd and Colman, and perhaps Churchill. Probably he was much like other young men who lived in the Temple in those days, when it was said of it: "The Temple is stocked with its peculiar beaux, wits, poets, critics, and every character in the gay world; and it is a thousand pities that so pretty a society should be disgraced with a few dull fellows who can submit to puzzle themselves with cases and reports." From 1763 to 1765 he was in an asylum; and it was there that, on recovering, he first received those strong religious impressions which coloured the rest of his life. He lived at Huntingdon from 1765 to 1767, most of the time with the Unwins, a clergyman's family with

whom he became very intimate. After Mr. Unwin's death in 1767, he and Mrs. Unwin moved to Olney, where they stayed till 1787. Here his poetry was mainly written, though his happiest days were probably those spent at Weston Underwood, a country village not far from Olney, to which Lady Hesketh persuaded them to move in 1787. There he stayed till 1795, and only left it because his terrible malady was so plainly returning that his young cousin, John Johnson, wished to have him with him in Norfolk where he could be always by his side. There he remained in different houses, but always in the same melancholy state, till the end came at Dereham in April 1800.

There are very few letters of the London period extant, but one of the few is so characteristic of Cowper and his easy, good-natured, sensible way of looking at life, that I must quote some of it. It is, if possible, truer and timelier in our day than it was in his; for there seems to be no more universally accepted doctrine nowadays than that the whole of life is to be absorbed in getting, or, equally often in unnecessarily increasing, the material means of life; no time being lost on life itself, in the higher meaning of the word. Cowper and Thurlow were in early years in the same attorney's office. Perhaps after all to us who look back on it now, the obscure and comparatively poor poet may seem to have got as much out of life as the Lord Chancellor! There may even be people bold enough to maintain that Cowper's life was better worth living than Thurlow's even if his poetry had been a failure.

But here is the letter or part of it:

If my resolution to be a great man was half so strong as it is to despise the shame of being a little one, I should not despair of a house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, with all its appurtenances: for there is nothing more certain, and I could prove it by a thousand instances, than that every man may be rich if he will. What is the industry of half the industrious men in the

world but avarice? and, call it by which name you will, it almost always succeeds. But this provokes me, that a covetous dog, who will work by candle-light in the morning to get what he does not want, shall be praised for his thriftiness, while a gentleman shall be abused for submitting to his wants, rather than work like an ass to relieve them. . . . Upon the whole, my dear Rowley, there is a degree of poverty that has no disgrace belonging to it; that degree of it, I mean, in which a man enjoys clean linen and good company; and, if I never sink below this degree of it, I care not if I never rise above it. This is a strange epistle, nor can I imagine how the devil I came to write it: but here it is, such as it is, and much good may you do with it.

There are naturally no letters while he was at St. Alban's, but they begin again as soon as he gets to Huntingdon. His experiences of keeping house for two persons are like other people's before and since:

DEAR JOE, [he is writing to Joseph Hill, who was his business adviser through life, and the best of friends beside].—Whatever you may think of the matter, it is no easy thing to keep house for two people. A man cannot always live upon sheep's heads and liver and lights, like the lions in the Tower; and a joint of meat in so small a family is an endless incumbrance. My butcher's bill for the last week amounted to four shillings and tenpence. I set off with a leg of lamb, and was forced to give part of it away to my washerwoman. Then I made an experience upon a sheep's heart, and that was too little. Next I put three pounds of beef into a pie, and this had like to have been too much, for it lasted three days, though my landlord was admitted to a share of it. Then as to small beer, I am puzzled to pieces about it. I have bought as much for a shilling as will serve us at least a month, and it is grown sour already. In short, I never knew how to pity poor housekeepers before; but now I cease to wonder at the politic cast which their occupation usually gives to their countenance, for it is really a matter full of perplexity.

Huntingdon must have seemed a quiet place after London, but Cowper seems to have settled down easily enough. "Here is a card assembly,"

he writes, "and a dancing assembly, and a horse race, and a club, and a bowling green,—so that I am well off, you perceive, in point of diversions; especially as I shall go to 'em just as much as I should if I lived a thousand miles off." The chief attraction to him was apparently the river. "The river Ouse,—I forget how they spell it—is the most agreeable circumstance in this part of the world: at this town it is, I believe, as wide as the Thames at Windsor: nor does the silver Thames better deserve that epithet, nor has it more flowers upon its banks, these being attributes, which, in strict truth, belong to neither. Fluellen would say, they are as like as my fingers to my fingers, and there is salmon in both. It is a noble stream to bathe in, and I shall make that use of it three times a week, having introduced myself to it for the first time this morning."

Having given bits from these letters to Hill, I ought not to omit what may be regarded as, in a certain sense, the other side of the picture. In the earnestness and enthusiasm of his new-born religious feelings, he had entered with the Unwins on a course of life which was very dangerous to one who had suffered as he had, and which indeed was not long in showing itself so. This is how they lived:

We breakfast commonly between eight and nine: till eleven we read either the Scripture, or the sermons of some faithful preacher of those holy mysteries: at eleven we attend Divine Service, which is performed here twice every day: and from twelve to three we separate and amuse ourselves as we please. During that interval I either read in my own apartment, or walk, or ride, or work in the garden. We seldom sit an hour after dinner: but, if the weather permits, adjourn to the garden, where, with Mrs. Unwin and her son, I have generally the pleasure of religious conversation till tea-time. If it rains, or is too windy for walking, we either converse within doors, or sing some hymns of Martin's collection: and, by the help of Mrs. Unwin's harpsichord, make up a tolerable concert, in which our hearts, I hope, are the best and most musical performers. After tea, we sally forth to walk

in good earnest. Mrs. Unwin is a good walker, and we have generally travelled about four miles before we see home again. At night we read and converse as before till supper, and commonly finish the evening either with hymns or a sermon, and last of all the family are called to prayers.

Well might Lady Hesketh say afterwards, with reference to days spent in similar fashion with Mr. Newton ; " to such a tender mind, and to such a wounded yet lively imagination, as our cousin's, I am persuaded that eternal praying and preaching was too much." There are, no doubt, many specially gifted spiritual natures who can literally obey the "Think of God more frequently than you breathe" of Epictetus, or the "Pray without ceasing" of St. Paul ; but they are the rare exceptions who combine the saints' love of God and sense of sin with an ease and cheerfulness of temperament which in any one else would be called Epicurean. The attempt to enforce such a life produces, if the first of the qualities be wanting, the cold and formal religion of the monk of the fifteenth century ; if the second be absent, as in Cowper's case, it produces melancholy or despair.

Less than a year after this letter was written Mr. Unwin died, and Cowper and Mrs. Unwin went to live at Olney. They stayed there nearly twenty years, and through Cowper's letters we are as well acquainted with their life there as if we had been their next door neighbours. His way of noting and describing all sorts of details and small matters, which other people would have passed over, makes our picture of the little house at Olney and its inhabitants as complete as an interior by Teniers or Ostade ; only fortunately the inhabitants are rather more attractive than the boors who are too often the only figures in Dutch pictures. A neat and careful gentleman of the eighteenth century like Cowper, particular about his wigs and buckles being of the fashionable shape, was not likely to crowd his canvas with the drunken ostlers and ploughmen of

Olney. His subjects are himself and his friends, and after them just the first thing beside, whatever it might be, that came into his head. Here is his theory of letter-writing :

MY DEAR FRIEND,—You like to hear from me : this is a very good reason why I should write. But I have nothing to say : this seems equally a good reason why I should not. Yet if you had alighted from your horse at our door this morning, and at this present writing, being five o'clock in the afternoon, had found occasion to say to me, 'Mr. Cowper, you have not spoke since I came in : have you resolved never to speak again ?' it would be but a poor reply if in answer to the summons I should plead inability as my best and only excuse. And this by the way suggests to me a seasonable piece of instruction, and reminds me of what I am very apt to forget, when I have any epistolary business in hand, that a letter may be written upon anything or nothing, just as that anything or nothing happens to occur. A man that has a journey before him twenty miles in length, which he is to perform on foot, will not hesitate and doubt whether he shall set out or not, because he does not readily conceive how he shall ever reach the end of it : for he knows that by the simple operation of moving one foot forward first, and then the other, he shall be sure to accomplish it. So it is in the present case, and so it is in every similar case. A letter is written as a conversation is maintained, or a journey performed : not by preconceived or premeditated means, a new contrivance or an invention never heard of before,—but merely by maintaining a progress, and resolving as a postilion does having once set out, never to stop till we reach the appointed end. If a man may talk without thinking, why may he not write upon the same terms ? A grave gentleman of the last century, a tie-wig, square-toe, Steinkirk figure would say—'My good Sir, a man has no right to do either.' But it is to be hoped that the present century has nothing to do with the mouldy opinions of the last : and so, good Sir Launcelot, or Sir Paul or whatever be your name, step into your picture frame again, and leave us moderns to think when we can and to write whether we can or not, else we might as well be dead as you are.

The difficulty in writing about letters is that to illustrate one must quote ;

and then, as the charm of letters lies, or ought to lie, in the large, the quotation of a line or two, which is often enough in poetry, does not do justice to the letter-writer, and we have to quote nearly in full—which again demands a magnificent disregard of considerations of space. However, this letter which I have just been giving, seemed to me to have nearly irresistible claims, for not only is it the best account of Cowper's ideas about writing letters, but it is less accessible than many others. Mr. Benham, who has got most of the best letters in his selection, has left this one out.

Cowper's letters are generally characterised by a sort of careless, easy inevitableness, but he could go out of his way to *make* a letter sometimes. Here is a bit of rhyming *tour de force* sent to Mr. Newton. Its subject is his first volume of poems, and it is curious to note how, for all its cleverness, it remains a perfect letter with the true Janus-face looking back to the writer and on to the recipient; the rhyme is just the sort of joke Cowper liked; the careful explanation that the poems were written "in hopes to do good" is as plainly the Newtonian part of the affair. It begins, "My very dear friend, I am going to send, what when you have read, you may scratch your head, and say, I suppose, there's nobody knows, whether what I have got, be verse or not,—by the tune and the time, it ought to be rhyme; but if it be, did you ever see, of late or of yore, such a ditty before?" This sort of thing is kept up all through the letter and then he ends up: "I have heard before, of a room with a floor, laid upon springs, and such like things, with so much art, in every part, that when you went in, you was forced to begin a minuet pace, with an air and a grace, swimming about, now in and now out, with a deal of state, in a figure of eight, without pipe or string, or any such thing; and now I have writ, in a rhyming fit, what will make you

dance, and as you advance, will keep you still, though against your will, dancing away, alert and gay, till you come to an end of what I have penned; which that you may do, ere Madam and you are quite worn out with jiggling about, I take my leave, and here you receive a bow profound, down to the ground, from your humble me, W. C."

A letter like this is worth giving, because it is probably unique in the annals of the art; but it is the less striking letters that are really more characteristic of Cowper. The best are those which we hardly notice the first time we read them, but like better every time we take them up. One of the most charming of the letters from Olney is the second he wrote to Lady Hesketh when John Gilpin had induced her to begin their old correspondence again. This is how he ends it:

I have not answered many things in your letter, nor can do it at present for want of room. I cannot believe but that I should know you, notwithstanding all that time may have done. There is not a feature of your face, could I meet it upon the road by itself, that I should not instantly recollect. I should say, that is my cousin's nose, or those are her lips and her chin, and no woman upon earth can claim them but herself. As for me, I am a very smart youth of my years. I am not indeed grown gray so much as I am grown bald. No matter. There was more hair in the world than ever had the honour to belong to me. Accordingly, having found just enough to curl a little at my ears, and to intermix with a little of my own that still hangs behind, I appear, if you see me in an afternoon, to have a very decent head-dress, not easily distinguished from my natural growth: which being worn with a small bag, and a black ribbon about my neck, continues to me the charms of my youth, even at the verge of age. Away with the fear of writing too often. Yours my dearest cousin, W. C.

P.S. That the view I give you of myself may be complete, I add the two following items, that I am in debt to nobody, and that I grow fat.

But perhaps the most inimitable and delightful of all Cowper's epis-

tolary virtues is his power of telling stories. Everybody has felt how little power the ordinary story-teller, whether on paper or in conversation, has of making us go with him, and see the thing as he sees it. Cowper's stories are as alive for us as they were for his friends. Take for instance this little account of a country election in the old days :

We were sitting yesterday after dinner, the two ladies and myself, very composedly, and without the least apprehension of any such intrusion, in our snug parlour, one lady knitting, the other netting, and the gentleman winding worsted, when, to our unspeakable surprise, a mob appeared before the window, a smart rap was heard at the door, the boys hallooed, and the maid announced Mr. Grenville. Puss was unfortunately let out of her box, so that the candidate, with all his good friends at his heels, was refused admittance at the grand entry, and referred to the back door, as the only possible way of approach. Candidates are creatures not very susceptible of affronts, and would rather, I suppose, climb in at a window than be absolutely excluded. In a minute, the yard, the kitchen, and the parlour were filled. Mr. Grenville, advancing towards me, shook me by the hand with a degree of cordiality that was extremely seducing. As soon as he, and as many more as could find chairs were seated, he began to open the intent of his visit. I told him I had no vote, for which he readily gave me credit. I assured him I had no influence, which he was not equally inclined to believe, and the less, no doubt, because Mr. Ashburner, the drapier, addressing himself to me at that moment, informed me that I had a great deal. Supposing that I could not be possessed of such a treasure without knowing it, I ventured to confirm my first assertion by saying that if I had any I was utterly at a loss to imagine where it could be, or wherein it consisted. Thus ended the conference. Mr. Grenville squeezed me by the hand again, kissed the ladies, and withdrew. He kissed likewise the maid in the kitchen, and seemed upon the whole a most loving, kissing, kind-hearted gentleman.

There are very few pictures of life in the last century where the figures stand out of the canvas so clear, direct, and natural, with their own

personality about them as they do here. And how charmingly Cowper's humour lights up the whole picture ! He is always amusing about himself and his own importance, and gives us a number of little touches on the subject which are worth noting. He had no poetic contempt for personal adornment ; when his friend Unwin is going up to town, he writes to him : " My head will be obliged to you for a hat, of which I enclose a string that gives you the circumference. The depth of the crown must be four inches and one eighth. Let it not be a round slouch, which I abhor, but a smart, well-cocked, fashionable affair."

His fame too, when it came, amused him very much, and he is never tired of joking about it. " I cannot help adding a circumstance that will divert you. Martin [an innkeeper] having learned from Sam whose servant he was, told him that he had never seen Mr. Cowper, but he had heard him frequently spoken of by the companies that had called at his house, and therefore when Sam would have paid for his breakfast, would take nothing from him. Who says that fame is only empty breath ! On the contrary it is good ale and cold beef into the bargain." So again, and neither of these are given by Mr. Benham who, no doubt, could not find room for all the good things,—“ I have been tickled with some douceurs of a very flattering nature by the post. A lady unknown addresses the best of men ; —an unknown gentleman has read my inimitable poems, and invites me to his seat in Hampshire—another incognito gives me hopes of a memorial in his garden, and a Welsh attorney sends me his verses to revise, and obligingly asks,

‘ Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale ?’

“ If you find me a little vain hereafter, my friend, you must excuse it, in consideration of these powerful incentives, especially the latter : for

surely the poet who can charm an attorney, especially a Welsh one, must be at least an Orpheus, if not something greater." And he tells Lady Hesketh: "I have received an anonymous complimentary Pindaric Ode from a little poet who calls himself a schoolboy. I send you the first stanza by way of specimen.

To William Cowper, of the Inner Temple, Esq. of his poems in the second volume.

'In what high strains, my Muse, wilt thou Attempt great Cowper's worth to show?

Pindaric strains shall tune the lyre,

And 'twould require

A Pindar's fire

To sing great Cowper's worth,

The lofty bard, delightful sage,

Ever the wonder of the age,

And blessing to the earth.'

"Adieu, my precious cousin, your lofty bard and delightful sage expects you with all possible affection."

But we are getting now, indeed have already got, so far as some of the letters I have been quoting are concerned, into the Weston Underwood period of the poet's life, where he is at his happiest and best, enjoying his success and fame, and the many friendships, both old, re-opened and new discovered, which his fame brought him, busy at his Homer with a fixed quantity to translate every day, so that he always writes in "Homer hurry,"—a kind of hurry which somehow produces the most lazy, delightful letters—occupied and amused, in fact, in such a fashion that his melancholy found no loophole to get in by till Homer was finished and despatched, Mrs. Unwin aging every day and often suffering, and only the uncongenial task of editing Milton was there to save him from himself. We will not follow him there, except in sympathy; indeed, after a very few more specimens of his "divine chit-chat," as Coleridge called it, we must take our leave of him altogether, and bring this paper to an end. I have given one specimen of his story-telling powers. Here is another, this time to Mrs. Throck-

morton, the wife of the Squire of Weston Underwood:

MY DEAR MRS. FROG,—You have by this time (I presume) heard from the Doctor, whom I desired to present to you our best affections, and to tell you that we are well. He sent an urchin (I do not mean a hedgehog, commonly called an urchin in old times, but a boy, commonly so called at present), expecting that he would find you at Bucklands, whither he supposed you gone on Thursday. He sent him charged with divers articles, and among others with letters, or, at least, with a letter: which I mention that, if the boy should be lost together with his despatches, past all possibility of recovery, you may yet know that the Doctor stands acquitted of not writing. That he is utterly lost (that is to say, the boy, for the Doctor being the last antecedent, as the grammarians say, you might otherwise suppose that he was intended) is the more probable, because he was never four miles from his home before, having only travelled at the side of a plough-team: and when the Doctor gave him his direction to Bucklands, he asked, very naturally, if that place was in England. So what has become of him Heaven knows! I do not know that any adventures have presented themselves since your departure worth mentioning, except that the rabbit that infested your Wilderness has been shot for devouring your carnations; and that I myself have been in some danger of being devoured in like manner by a great dog, namely, Pearson's. But I wrote him a letter on Friday informing him that unless he tied up his great mastiff in the daytime, I would send him a worse thing, commonly called and known by the name of an attorney. When I go forth to ramble in the fields I do not sally, like Don Quixote, with a purpose of encountering monsters, if any such can be found: but am a peaceable poor gentleman, and a poet, who means nobody any harm, the fox hunters and the two Universities of this land excepted. I cannot learn from any creature whether the Turnpike Bill is alive or dead: so ignorant am I, and by such ignoramus surrounded. But if I know little else, this at least I know, that I love you and Mr. Frog: that I long for your return, and that I am, with Mrs. Unwin's best affections, Ever yours, W. C.

I am afraid I am showing the magnificent disregard of considerations of space of which I spoke just now, but

the temptation to give this letter in full was too great; it has always seemed to me so perfectly easy and charming, and it gives a delightful glimpse into the happiness of those early days at Weston and the pleasant intimacy that existed between the Lodge and the Hall. The Lodge wrote complimentary verses to the Hall, and the Hall (in the person of Mrs. Throckmorton and her Roman Catholic chaplain, the *Padre* of whom Cowper got very fond), transcribed the Lodge's translation of Homer; Cowper and Mrs. Unwin dined constantly with the "Frogs" and the "Frogs" occasionally with them, and altogether life seems to have passed very agreeably. Poor Cowper got into trouble for it with Mr. Newton, who did not like Roman Catholics, and kept a careful watch over his flock; but the poet could stand on his dignity when he pleased, and he would not give up his new friends; and as the *Padre* did not apparently even attempt a conversion, no harm came of it.

The two most important of the friendships Cowper made in the latter part of his life were those with Hayley, who was afterwards his biographer, and with his young cousin John Johnson, who took charge of him during his melancholy closing years, and proved himself in every way unwearying in his devotion. He was a Cambridge undergraduate when his cousin first made his acquaintance, and his high spirits and good nature made Cowper take to him at once. The poet liked to get him to Weston for his vacations, and he seems to have brightened everybody up when he stayed there. The letters to him are nearly always bright and cheerful. Here is one of the last of the really happy ones. It is headed "To Pean!"

MY DEAREST JOHNNY,—Even as you foretold, so it came to pass. On Tuesday I received your letter, and on Tuesday came the pheasants: for which I am indebted in many thanks, as well as Mrs. Unwin, both to your kindness, and to your kind friend Mr. Copeman.

In Copeman's ear this truth let Echo tell,—
Immortal bards like mortal pheasants well.
And when his clerkship's out, I wish him
herds
Of golden clients for his golden birds.

Our friends the Courtenays have never dined with us since their marriage, *because* we have never asked them: and we have never asked them *because* poor Mrs. Unwin is not so equal to the task of providing for and entertaining company as before this last illness. But this is no objection to the arrival here of a bustard: rather it is a cause for which we shall be particularly glad to see the monster. It will be a handsome present to *them*. So let the bustard come, as the Lord Mayor of London said to the hare, when he was hunting,—'Let her come, a' God's name, I am not afraid of her.' Adieu my dear cousin and caterer—My eyes terribly bad, else I had much more to say to you."

Not very long after this letter was written, Mrs. Unwin's health of body and mind entirely broke down, and her affection, which had so long been the greatest of blessings to Cowper, became all at once the very reverse, for she insisted on his spending his days in her room, reading to her and writing for her—occupations which had always tried him; and as she could hardly speak, and he was thrown in this way entirely on her society, he naturally relapsed into the old melancholy. Lady Hesketh found him in 1794 in a terrible state of insanity, refusing food, walking incessantly up and down his room, filled with the most awful imaginations. Then they took him to Norfolk in the next year and unhappily he lived on till April 25th, 1800. The despair lasted up to the moment of death; but it is consoling, as well as curious, to know, that from that moment "the expression with which his countenance settled was that of calmness and composure, mingled, as it were, with holy surprise." And certainly, as Southey says, "never was there a burial at which the mourners might, with more sincerity of feeling, give their hearty thanks to Almighty God, that it had pleased Him to deliver the departed

out of the miseries of this sinful world."

Cowper's letters are so perfectly easy and simple and sincere that we can enjoy them in whatever mood we may happen to be, just as we can always enjoy *Guy Mannering* or *Emma*. And we enjoy them simply for their own sake. Half the interest of Lord Chesterfield's letters lies in what may be called his philosophy of life; Horace Walpole is at least as important from the point of view of the student of social and political history as from that of the lover of letters, and Gray too has a great deal to tell us which would be interesting and important in a book. The great merit of Cowper in this line is that he is not a philosopher, or a politician, or a scholar, but simply and solely a writer of letters. He has no extraneous claims on our interest,

and indeed he became one of the best, if not the very best, of English letter-writers by simply not trying to become anything else. No one but Gray, and perhaps Lamb, has anything like his delicacy of style and humour, and Gray, at any rate, is not generally so spontaneous as Cowper. Never were letters written with less idea of publication. He destroyed all he received, and asked his correspondents to do the same with his. The letters would never have been published but for the success of the poems; but it is possible that there are many people now who are tempted to renew their forgotten acquaintance with Cowper as a poet by learning from his letters how delightful he was as a man.

J. C. BAILEY.

PHILANTHROPY AND THE POOR-LAW.

"CAN any charity come out of a Board of Guardians?" is a question likely to rouse as much scorn as a parallel question about Nazareth. Guardians have never escaped the reproaches levelled at them in *Oliver Twist*. Public opinion condemns them as the hard and official protectors of "Bumble," and by Mr. Booth's preachers the Poor-Law is often made matter for scorn. The Report of the Whitechapel Guardians just published makes therefore strange reading. Its table of contents shows that the Guardians, in addition to their ordinary administration of the Infirmary and Workhouse, deal with Rescue Work, Children's Country Holidays, Emigration, Foreign Immigration, Protection of Children, and Winter Distress. It will be seen that their work is such as cannot be left out of consideration in any scheme for helping the poor, and it raises the question whether the Poor-Law must not be the foundation on which any such scheme is based.

With regard, for example, to Rescue Work, there is no Shelter in London so large as that afforded by the Workhouse. It is here that women come when the Shelters raised by some wave of passing emotion fail. It is here at some period or other of their lives that the greater number of the poor fallen men and women seek refuge. On this subject the Guardians say: "Those who best know the East End of London, best know how patiently and successfully the organised work of social rescue has been through long years carried on, and how unjust it would be now to measure its results by the extent to which they are publicly paraded, or to assume that the degraded and miserable are submerged and uncared for. In this connection

it may be stated that in the Whitechapel Workhouse, the efforts of the matron alone during the past year have resulted in placing upon their feet, and introducing into respectable service, forty-three female paupers. This fact needs no comment, while it is to be observed that it is additional to the excellent work carried on by the lady visitors." This fact, which needs no comment, and the other fact as to the co-operation of the lady visitors, show that there is a steady direction of friendly effort against the inroads of vice. No agency in this field can claim great success. It seems as if it needed all the love and all the time of one woman to raise one other woman. No system is successful, and many systems absorb much thought and money merely to keep them going. The Guardians have rooms, agents, nurses and doctors; they have a machinery which is always in order and always at work. Alongside of this machinery they have the service of devoted women who visit the wards, make friends of the women, and send them out to work with the memory of a love which is both strong and kind. Vice is vice, and that pity which has in it no element of indignation will not really touch the wrong-doer. A weak spot in much of the Rescue Work is its tendency to substitute pity for mercy, and to treat the sinner so as to make her minimise her sin. They who thus work may attract large numbers to their Shelters: they do catch sometimes the feeblar natures; but they alienate the stronger, who want sympathy in their own self-condemnation as much as they want it in their aspirations after a better life. The Guardians, who offer on the one hand the discipline of the House, and on the other the

service of a friend, have a charity which is more like His who on occasions could be angry and who sternly taught that for every idle word an account would be required.

Children's Country Holidays is almost the latest pet object of the charitable. Good ladies have funds called after their own names, and they rival one another in their efforts to give poor children a fortnight's fresh air. The Guardians have not lagged behind in this forward movement, and they have sent a party of children from their schools to enjoy holidays in the homes of cottagers living in the open country. In their necessarily formal language they speak of "the physical, mental and moral advantage to be derived from the fortnight's stay," but it is easy to imagine something of what lies behind that language. How the child prim and proper, drilled and clean, stiff from the great district school at Forest Gate, must have revelled in the freedom of cottage life! How interesting must have been the ways of the family, how awakening the varied sights; how the mind and heart must have responded to new calls; how many memories must have been left to influence in after years the choice for a country life as against a life in town! The Guardians who gave this "physical, mental and moral advantage" are certainly not to be omitted in a list of charitable agencies.

Emigration is another object undertaken by rival Societies which in the Report receives quiet and reasonable notice. In a short paragraph it is stated that with the consent of the High Commissioner such and such persons have been settled in Canada, and reports follow showing that previous emigrants are doing well. The charity of the act is as the charity of the rival Societies. Miss A. and Mr. B., who advertise their work and collect large subscriptions, have done no more than the Guardians of Whitechapel have done; but it is

questionable if any of the voluntary Societies could give so adequate and complete a record of each individual emigrated. There is an obvious danger in this sort of charity. It is so easy to take the unknown for the successful, and to think that because the poor are out of sight, they are therefore out of need. The sanguine and impatient temper of the philanthropist is hardly to be trusted in a matter where results are so far out of reach, and his supporters are too glad to hear of success to make any enquiries. The calm and official notice of the Guardians may therefore be even a better guarantee of the charity which *considereth* the poor than the warm and glowing generalities of charitable agencies. Service "with a quiet mind" is the service often wanted in those who serve the poor.

Foreign Immigration is a matter which is now rousing heated feeling. In the name of charity it has been urged that, "This is the agency which reduces the price of labour below its fair level, which renders effective combination among the sweated classes impossible, and which drives many Englishmen from their own country to seek a livelihood in some distant land, so that while foreign paupers are landing every day on these shores, Englishmen are being forced out to make room for them." And in the name of the same charity the feelings of the poor have been roused against the foreigner whose habits are different and whose poverty absorbs benevolence. Sometimes it is almost made to seem as if the one thing necessary to raise the poor of East London was the exclusion of the foreigner. The Whitechapel Guardians have gone into the matter and, in the spirit of the Scientific Charity inaugurated by Mr. Charles Booth, have looked at facts. It has been found that three-fourths of the Jews in England are in London, and two-thirds of this number in Whitechapel, and that in Whitechapel only thirteen per cent. of the population are

aliens. Further, it has been found that of the seven hundred and eighty-eight indoor paupers only eight are tailors, nineteen shoemakers, and four cabinet-makers,—the trades chiefly affected by alien immigrants. "The statistics," says the Report, "of pauperism within the Whitechapel Union do not enable us to affirm with any positiveness that the burdens of the ratepayers have to any material extent been increased by the incursion of foreign poor into the district." Here are two voices. The voice of Charity calls us to shut out the naked and the hungry and the stranger; it makes his destitution a charge, and works on the selfishness of his fellow-workmen to oppress him still further. The voice of Officialism says, "The poor foreigner is not the plague you think him to be; he does not steal as you think he steals; he is at any rate a man, and he can be raised. Go on calmly. Deal with him as with your own fellow-citizens and raise his standard of living." Surely there is some confusion in these voices, and it is Charity which speaks in the name of Officialism.

One of the saddest of modern revelations is the cruelty which children endure at the hands of their parents. It is a national disgrace that it should be necessary to found a National Society for preventing cruelty to children. Under the banner of that Society, ardent men and women have been enlisted, and as yet their zeal seems to have given few signs of flagging or of extravagance. The Guardians by their works deserve also to be enrolled among the protectors of children. They have done the duty effectively. A recent Act of Parliament gives them power to adopt a child deserted by its parents and to keep it, if a boy until the age of sixteen, and if a girl until the age of eighteen. The Whitechapel Guardians have during the year used the power so as to take twenty-seven children under their care. These twenty-seven children drawn from the common lodging-

houses and furnished rooms which are the disgrace of a small area in the Whitechapel Union, may be boarded out in country cottages, where under the care of some motherly woman they will be trained in loving and in enjoying. The process in its first stages is so protected that there can be no abuses either through the over-eagerness of the charitable or the changeableness of the poor. There can be no writs of Habeas Corpus to put an end to good work or to shake men's faith in the honest intentions of the philanthropist. In its latter stages the supervision is no less sustained and careful. The adopted child will not, because its first friends are too busy or have died, become a slave-servant or be allowed to begin life unbefriended. The Guardians have a machinery which reaches far, and having put a heart into the machine they are able to do effectively that which charity tries and often fails to do.

The winter distress brought into operation a new army of helpers. The tale of their campaign has been written in glowing language, and the world which has heard the tale has been at once shocked by the evidence of distress and comforted by the thought that at least something has been done. Whitechapel has naturally been ground chosen for the operations of the army of helpers. Its reputation, the presence in its midst of so many who are wretched and destitute, has led to the establishment of many shelters, workshops and mission rooms. Within the radius of one quarter of a mile there are, it is said, no less than fifty centres of charitable work. Among the resources available for dealing with Winter Distress the Guardians are rarely counted, but this Report shows that they are not only familiar with the condition of the district, but also that they have thoughtfully dealt with its distress. They tell how, addressing the District Board of Works, they expressed readiness to co-operate in the direction of "Recommending for employment those who from their pre-

vious circumstances and conditions it is most desirable should not be placed under the necessity of receiving relief at the cost of the rates. At the same time, the Guardians disavowed any desire or intention to ask the District Board to do more than aid them in dealing with the front rank of resident heads of families, of good character, whose homes are worth preserving and therefore the conditions precedent to a recommendation to the District Board would be an honest, industrious character, a willingness to work, a *bonâ fide* residence in the district of at least six months, and the possession of a decent home." The language is not the language of charitable reports; but those who recognise that the best relief is that which considers the poor and respects the desire to work rather than to beg,—a desire which is not dead in any one—will acknowledge that the methods of the Guardians are inspired by the spirit of true charity. This enquiry into circumstances, this steady offer of help to those who themselves have made an effort, has been going on regularly; and the Guardians, like the Cardinal in Browning's play, reflecting on the various spasmodic attempts to suddenly right what is wrong, may say, "We have known four and twenty leaders of revolt." Probably if the Cardinal and they could speak their minds, they would say that it is these "revolts," these sudden attempts by means of Mansion House Funds, Salvation Army schemes, and rival charities, which hinder the operation of methods founded on knowledge and carried out with regularity. At the same time, as may be gathered from the tables and statistics at the end of the Report, the Guardians welcome the co-operation of charitable workers. One table tells how two hundred and forty-five families have been assisted by ways and means not at the disposal of the Guardians. Many have received grants of money, large or small, with which to buy tools or get clear of debt; many have received pensions, many have been

found situations. Another table tells how the service of ladies has been enlisted to befriend girls who have been placed out in the world. A few dry figures and a few short sentences tell the history of thirty-five girls under twenty years of age. Those who know the facts know how much lies behind these short sentences, the many visits and the hearty sympathy which enables for instance the lady who visited J. S. to say she "has been nearly four years in this her first place and doing very well,—is stronger than she was, but still requires much care." If in many cases the ladies' report is sad, while the first thought of the reader must be "How refreshing to get truthfulness," the second must be a reflection on the system of big schools which costing the Guardians about thirteen shillings a week for each child sends out thirty-five girls of whom only four can be said to be doing "very satisfactorily" and only eleven "satisfactorily." Large Charity Schools give other returns of their own work, but their returns have not to be submitted to the impartial scrutiny of officials.

The Whitechapel Guardians do not in the present Report dwell at length upon what they have done and are doing in the ordinary administration of the Poor-Law Relief. It is only between the lines that it can be read how they have practically abolished out-relief, substituting for the necessarily hard hand of the Relieving officer, the soft touch of the charitable visitor, how they have made the Infirmary a rival to the Hospital by efficient nursing and pleasant surroundings, and how the workhouse is in fact an Industrial School wherein a man or woman may, if they will, learn what is useful. At the same time the language of the Report is such that no one reading it will think that all is done that is possible. Their work is in the Guardians' estimation far from perfect. Some changes are wanted in the law. Their buildings being old-fashioned require constant alteration, and for want of adequate support

their efforts have somewhat the nature of experiments. In almost every paragraph it is possible to read an appeal for help directed to those whose will to help the poor is strong enough to endure control.

The union of voluntary and official charity is the striking feature in the system of the Whitechapel Guardians. In this union there seems to be equal gain to each. It is a marriage in which each supplies what the other lacks. Voluntary charity gains "backbone," it becomes strong and regular. Official charity gains delicacy of touch, the power of adapting itself to individual needs.

If the union were complete, if all the force of voluntary charity now thrown into Whitechapel were brought into union with the official charity of the Guardians, it is possible that the dreams of some reformers would be realised. Then it might be that relief would go to those whom relief would help; and punishment to those whom punishment would help. Then it might be that those who are helped and those who are punished should

alike feel the friendship of a fellow-man or a fellow-woman willing to share their sorrow and their hope. Then it might be that the Workhouse would cease to be a degradation, and be deterrent only by being educational. The Report of the Whitechapel Guardians shows that the official administration is strong, and that it is willing to accept the co-operation of voluntary charity. Other reports show that voluntary charity is also strong. With whom does it lie to make the union between them complete?

A Board of Guardians has admitted people of good will into its counsels, it has adopted a policy framed in consideration for the needs of the poor, and it has welcomed the help of those who love the poor. If charity will submit to be restrained by experience, to surrender will-worship and to work within limits; if charity will be regular and give up short cuts to large ends; if charity will be content to drop its party watch-words and work under a common flag, then it may be that help which is both human and strong will be brought to raise the poor.